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TO OUR READERS:

In compliance with the Israeli military authorities, and under the guise of the much-needed Arabic Daily and Bi-weekly Hebrew Edition, to the Israeli censorship authorities, who use this blanket authority excessively. The material appearing on pages labeled with letters has all been censored and expunged by the Israeli authorities. We found it necessary and relevant to publish it on these pages in the foreign edition.

THE ONLY ENGLISH LANGUAGE NEWSPAPER PUBLISHED IN THE OCCUPIED TERRITORIES

TNT Hits Russian Church

A Russian Orthodox nun "miraculously" escaped injury, January 15, when a booby-trapped Israeli army-issue hand grenade exploded as she opened the door of her flat at the Ain Karem convent. The explosion, which resembles nearly a dozen other attacks against Christian and Muslim religious institutions, was attributed by the Israeli police to the Israeli "Terror Against Terror" group (TNT).

The bomb went off at 9:00 am. The nun said she heard a sound like a stone dropping as she opened her door, followed by a hissing. She immediately ran around a corner before the grenade exploded. The force of the explosion blew the door to pieces.

The grenade, the same type issued by the Israeli army, was apparently booby-trapped in the same way as bombs in TNT attacks — the safety pin was

removed and the handle fastened under a stone. An Israeli police officer later told reporters that the nun had "miraculously escaped injury."

West Jerusalem mayor Teddy Kollek attacked Israeli officials saying "not everybody is taking this matter seriously."

Last spring, two Russian Orthodox nuns were stabbed to death by an American. The man is said to be undergoing psychiatric tests in Israeli custody.

Israeli police sources say they suspect the as yet unfound Israeli TNT terrorist group, but no responsibility has been claimed. The group has been held responsible for at least 14 bomb attacks in various parts of the West Bank, including the bombing of Christian and Muslim institutions in Jerusalem, Azariya and Hebron. One nun and three mosque imams have been injured in TNT attacks.

his talks with the Jordanian officials. "I consider myself as a peace pioneer, I do not represent any side. I am a Palestinian who is a Knesset member and who has an Israeli passport," Watad said in the radio interview.

Watad said the invitation showed a new perspective in international protocol. It will be the first public trip of an Israeli passport-holder to Jordan. Jordan recently passed a regulation forbidding even West Bank residents to exit from an "enemy" (Tel Aviv) airport on a *laissez passer* and then enter Jordan on their own Jordanian passports.

Watad said the present period calls for strengthening the Palestinian-Jordanian dialogue and that his party believes that self-determination could be applied through the establishment of a joint Jordanian-Palestinian state. Watad said that such a state would be "premature" at this time. "The most important thing is to get rid of the occupation."

Local Palestinian political commentators fear that Jordan is now flirting with the Israeli Labour Alignment to end the Palestinian problem, in their own way.

The Jordanian government denied, according to an Agence France Presse report, that any official invitation had been extended to Watad.

ISRAELI MK TO VISIT JORDAN

Israel Knesset member Mohammed Watad of Mapam (a left Zionist Alignment party) confirmed January 13 to Israel Radio that he has been invited to visit Jordan. The invitation to talk to government officials came a month ago, according to Watad, from unnamed Jordanian figures. The message was relayed to Watad by someone he termed a "respectable West Bank figure." No date was set for the expedition.

Watad, an ardent Camp David supporter, was in the first Israeli delegations to Egypt after the signing of the bilateral treaty in 1979. He has been used by the Israeli government in attempts to "normalise" relations between Egypt and some Palestinian circles in Israel.

After consultation with Victor Shemtov, secretary general of Mapam, Watad applied to the "authorities concerned" for a permit to go to Jordan. He has received no response yet. Watad described his planned visit as "personal," to exchange opinions. Watad denied that he would represent the Israeli position in



'SOUNDS' NOW WITHIN MILITARY PURVIEW

A new amendment to an Israeli military order will outlaw private parties and cultural festivals organised by local institutions according to a West Bank legal expert.

Last month military order 1079 amended order 101 concerning the "prohibition of incitement and adverse propaganda." MO 101 was issued August 1967.

According to the new amendment restrictions were added to the military order dealing with "sounds," cassettes, photography, film and recording.

MO 101 deals with publication and printing. MO 1079 adds to it definitions of all kinds of "communication expressions" such as the sound of bells, records, cassette tapes or any sound which can be interpreted as political. The new amendment redefines publication to include the spoken word, handwriting printing, the showing of films or any kind of publication.

Palestinian legal sources said, interpreting the new order, that Israeli authorities could now prohibit any unlicensed music

party or festival carried out by individuals or local institutes.

A lawyer from Ramallah said, "What is the criteria for hostile bell ringing?" He noted that people make thousands of sounds. "Is it possible that someone saying a banned word will be punished according to the law? What criteria is there for banned or unbanned words or sounds?"

People breaking the provisions of order 101 can be jailed for 10 years, fined or both.

Molotov Youths Jailed

Severe prison terms were handed down against five Palestinian youths from the village of Bidya, west of Nablus, January 9, after they were convicted by an Israeli military court of throwing Molotov cocktails.

The youths, aged between 19 and 22 years, were convicted of attacking Israeli vehicles last May on the "Trans-Samaria" road which cuts through the northern part of the West Bank.

The harshest sentence was given to Yasser Abu Safiyeh, who got four-and-a-half years imprisonment, with two-and-a-half years suspended.

Jamal Salameh and Musa Salah were given four years each with three years suspended sentences. Mustafa Daif received a three-and-a-half year prison sentence and a similar period suspended. The last of the group, Ibrahim Odeh, was sentenced to five years, half of which was

suspended.

In his verdict, the military judge said that he decided to give heavy sentences in order to deter other youths from carrying out similar attacks. Last week, the same military court sentenced a Qalqiliya youth to five years after he was convicted on similar charges.

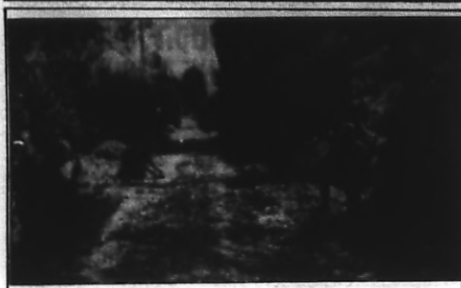
In a related story, the Ramallah military court sentenced, January 10, six youths from

the Hebron area to prison terms ranging from two-and-a-half years to six years.

Israel Radio said that the six youths were convicted of "planning to kill Israeli settlers" from Kiryat Arba. According to the actual charge sheets, the six youths carried knives from 1981 to 1983 "for the purpose of attacking Israeli settlers," but "never had the chance to do so."

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Israeli soldiers uproot fruit trees near Sidon this week as a part of attempts to counter mounting resistance against the occupation of southern Lebanon.

Six Israelis Wounded in S. Lebanon Attacks

Six Israeli soldiers were wounded in south Lebanon, last week, in attacks by the joint Palestinian-Lebanese resistance. The attacks were particularly concentrated in the Nabatiya and Sidon areas. Some military observers say there is a real war of attrition in the south.

Three Israeli soldiers were badly wounded, January 12, in an ambush on an Israeli military convoy three kilometres south of the Zaharani River, according to the Israeli military spokes-person. The attackers used light arms and withdrew before Israeli reinforcements arrived. The wounded soldiers were treated on the spot and then transferred by helicopter to a Haifa military hospital.

Israeli newspapers further reported three other attacks which, according to the papers, did not result in casualties.

The *Jerusalem Post* reported that an armoured personnel carrier was damaged after it ran over a land mine, east of Sidon, January 12.

The same day, an Israeli position in Tyre came under small arms fire from a speeding car, according to the same source.

Israeli soldiers pursued the car, but the attackers got away.

There were reports of a hand grenade attack on a military convoy. No further details were given.

Two Israeli soldiers were wounded, January 13, when a grenade thrown from a speeding car exploded in their vehicle in Nabatiya. Israeli troops opened fire at the car but it escaped, according to the Israeli military sources.

Israeli troops suffered a sixth casualty, three days earlier, January 10. The soldier was wounded when an explosive device exploded beside a road he was patrolling.

Al Fajr Arabic daily quoted an Israeli Radio report which said that two grenades were thrown, January 15, at an Israeli patrol in central Sidon.

An attack on a convoy was reported south of Sidon the same day. Press reports here said it was impossible to estimate casualties as Israeli troops closed the area.

Israel Radio reported that a grenade was detonated under a military vehicle near the village of Ansar, January 15.

Haddad worked closely with the Israelis since 1976. He was given a fief in the area after the Israeli 1978 invasion. Shortly before his death he was reinstated in the Lebanese army and, according to Israeli reports, both the Lebanese authorities in Beirut and the Israelis are looking now for successors.

Erratum

Issue No. 188, top, p. 1, para. 3 should read: "...few also doubt that in the immediate future Syria — the first Arab country to find itself on the frontline not only against Israel but also against the United States — is going to gain enormously in prestige and political influence from the American aggression."

THIS WEEK'S CENSORSHIP

Following is a breakdown of censorship cuts for issue 194, January 18, 1984:

Number of original articles submitted to censors	34
Number of articles totally censored out	11
Number of articles mutilated beyond use	1
Number of articles partially censored but used	1
Number of articles passed	21

ITALY REJECTS GEMAYEL DEMANDS

by Livia Rokach

Rome, January 13: The Italian government officially rejected demands by the Gemayel regime that the Italian contingent of the Multi-National Force evacuate completely its present positions in the Palestinian camps in Beirut and shift to the centre of West Beirut to take over the protection of the business and commercial areas as well as of government buildings. The motivation given for the refusal is "the need to prevent reprisal actions against the camp populations." The note further states that the Italian contingent will hand over the protection of the camps only to United Nations troops.

In a related development, Italian Foreign Minister Giulio Andreotti met January 12 in New York with Secretary-General Perez de Cuellar, to examine the possibilities of a similar replacement. After the meeting, Andreotti said he will discuss the issue next week in Stockholm with Soviet Foreign Minister Andrei Gromyko. The USSR has until now vetoed proposals for the installation of UN forces in Beirut.

Meanwhile, the Roman daily *il Messaggero*, quoting US Congress and State Department sources, says in a correspondence from Washington that "the American military presence in Lebanon has been exploited by the Lebanese president's father, president of the Phalangist Party Pierre Gemayel, for his own purposes." According to *il Messaggero*'s envoy, who interviewed Robert Pelletreau, deputy to the state department Middle East desk head, Richard Murphy, "this exploitation must stop." This is the first time that the US military presence in Beirut at the service of the Phalangist faction is admitted. The interviewed official also revealed that the Reagan administration asked the Italian government to rapidly supply the Lebanese army with an unspecified number of armoured troop transport vehicles of which the US army is short. It is not known whether Rome intends to comply with the request.

Less than 48 hours after the failure of talks in Damascus between Reagan administration Special Envoy to the Middle East Donald Rumsfeld and Syrian President Hafez al-Assad, the US Sixth Fleet stationed off Lebanon renewed its attacks. The US warships New Jersey and Tannar shelled resistance positions around Kfar Shima in the Shouf mountains at 5:00 pm, January 15. The US Marines force stationed at Khaleid airport also intervened in the fighting between resistance positions and the Lebanese army base stationed at the airport behind the American lines, opening fire several times between the morning of January 13 and the night of January 15 with all the weapons at their disposal: heavy machine guns, cannons and tank-mounted Dragon and TOW missiles.

Heavy fighting continued to rage in Lebanon throughout the week, with high points reached on Friday, January 13, when fire exchanges were taking place at the same time in the Souk al-Gharb and Iqlim al-Kharroub areas, in Khaleid, Shuaifat, East Beirut and along the Green Line separating the two sectors of the capital, with Lebanese army, Phalangist militias, US and French MNF contingents on one side, PSP, Amal and other resistance groups on the other.

The US Marines at Khaleid claimed to have come under intense fire, January 13, during heavy fire exchanges between PSP forces in the Shouf and in Shuaifat and the Lebanese army base at the airport. In response to the Marines involvement, Amal forces occupied a five-storey building behind the American command and launched grenades and rockets at them from the rear. After a battle lasting more than an hour, the Marines and Lebanese artillery razed the building to the ground. At least 30 casualties are reported to have been caused to all sides in this battle although none of the parties released figures on their losses.

At the same time, Amal forces succeeded in re-establishing control over the 40-storey Murr Tower overlooking the Green Line — a strategic position lost to the Lebanese army last September. Snipers taking positions on the unfinished skyscraper harassed the French command based on the Green Line. A two-hour battle, during which the French MNF forces fired tons of ammunition against the tower, ended with each side maintaining their positions.

The fighting intensified on all fronts through the weekend, and on Monday morning, January 16, East Beirut neighbourhoods, the port area and the Green Line were being intensely shelled with GRAD missiles from resistance positions in the mountains. The collapse of the ninth ceasefire in three days is underscored by radio broadcasts calling on Beirut to remain in their shelters.

The intensification of the fighting was predicted last Thursday by Lebanese National Salvation Front leader Walid Jumblatt in an interview published in *Al Safir* as he took off for Moscow for talks with Soviet leaders on the Lebanese situation. In the interview, Jumblatt put responsibility for the situation, which, he said, "is going to worsen considerably in the next days," on the Lebanese government and its Western supporters, in particular the US. In Moscow, where the Soviet leadership reaffirmed its full support for the struggle of the Lebanese patriotic forces, Jumblatt called for the immediate withdrawal of the Israeli and American forces from Lebanon.

At the same time Hafez

al-Assad laid a tombstone on speculation circulating in the Western media that Damascus was about to exercise pressure on the Lebanese resistance to permit Gemayel's army to deploy in areas presently under the control of the patriotic forces. President Assad told both British Foreign Secretary Geoffrey Howe and Reagan's envoy Donald Rumsfeld that absolute conditions for any further negotiations in Lebanon consist of the withdrawal of Israeli and MNF forces, the abrogation of the May 17 Lebanese-Israeli accord and the recognition of the Arab nature of Lebanon with all that this involves. The US contingent, President Assad told Rumsfeld, is not only devoid of any characterisation as a peace force, it has in fact become one more militia in Lebanon, involved in the civil war on the side of the Phalangists. The search for a political solution implies in the first place that Lebanon should re-become an Arab country and not a European or American state in the Middle East, Assad told Rumsfeld. Therefore, "If Washington does not change its policy, becoming neutral and respectful of the sovereignty of Lebanon and other states in the region, any negotiations in the future would be nothing but a dialogue between the deaf," stated Assad in what sounds like an outright dismissal of Reagan's envoy.

On Sunday, January 15, commenting on Assad's statements to Rumsfeld, Radio Damascus said it was "high time the US understood that being in Lebanon does not serve its interests and the Israelis admitted having been defeated by the Lebanese resistance." In fact, since last week there has been an escalation of resistance operations in South Lebanon, with military actions against occupation forces averaging five attacks daily. Neither the air strikes nor the ever more frequent closures of Awali River crossing points — three times in the past six days — seem to dissuade the massive opposition to the occupation in the least. Despite official denials, Lebanese sources affirm that a large number of casualties have been suffered by the occupation forces in these actions.

Western observers in Beirut believe that the sharp rise in the resistance activities coupled with the rejection by the Lebanese patriotic forces and Syria of plans to deploy the Lebanese army in strategic positions in the mountains and south of Beirut — plans on which both Israel and Washington counted in their anxiety to withdraw at least part of their forces from Lebanon — are going to pose both the Yitzhak Shamir government and the Reagan administration in front of severe dilemmas in coming days.

Nazareth Paper Said Illegal

The Magistrates Court at Nazareth charged, January 14, Palestinian journalist Afif Salem with printing an unlicensed publication.

The Israeli prosecutor claimed Salem had contravened Israeli law for printing and publishing an unlicensed newspaper, *Al Bashir*. After the charge was

read the court adjourned until February 8.

Afif Salem told *Al Fajr* after the session that he had only published *Al Bashir* once, as is permitted without a license. He said, "This charge harms press freedom."

Salem, a former editor of *Al Ittihad*, has a masters degree in journalism from a Soviet university.

Three-bomb Hoax at Najah

There was a triple-bomb hoax, January 11, at Najah National University, Nablus. An unidentified telephone caller told the administration at 12:07 pm that three bombs on campus were due to explode at 12:15 pm.

All students, faculty members and university employees vacated halls, classrooms, cafeterias and courtyards, while university guards aided by students began a thorough search. They

did not find any bombs.

A squad of police and a unit of soldiers arrived at 12:20 pm, but students objected to soldiers entering the campus.

Sa'eb Arakat, director of public relations at Najah, said, "The telephone call was to create confusion at the university. I interpret this telephone call as a warning which perhaps will become reality in the future." Arakat did not attribute the call to any particular group.

Sick Prisoner Deported

JERUSALEM — "The Israeli authorities deported ailing Palestinian prisoner Nabil Shawkeh to Jordan, January 12.

"The Israeli action followed repeated requests by the prisoner's lawyer after Shawkeh's health deteriorated drastically. His kidneys have stopped func-

tioning and he was receiving dialysis.

"Shawkeh, 24, a Bethlehem resident, was arrested, November 9, 1982 and sentenced to seven years for membership of a 'hostile organization.' (Translation: *Al Ittihad*, January 12, 1984).

Ramallah Teachers Raided

JERUSALEM — "Israeli occupation troops broke into the house of Ramallah teacher Fadel Rimawi, a member of the teachers committee, January 11, searched it and confiscated 15 books. The home of Isma'il Othman, principal of the Hashemiyya school in Ramallah, was raided the same day and 25 books were confiscated.

"The raids come at a time when the Israeli authorities are increasing harassment of the members of the teachers committee in an attempt to find excuses to fire them.

"It is noteworthy that the confiscated books were purchased by the teachers from the public bookstores." (Translation: *Al Ittihad*, January 12, 1984).

Teachers Living in Poverty

Members of the General Committee of Government School Teachers in the West Bank issued a new statement January 6 protesting their substandard salaries. They said promises teachers received about a 15 percent rise "aim at drugging and calming teachers' anger and resentment."

In their statement teachers say their reduced monthly salaries, which are paid in shekels, are now only sufficient for 10 days. They point out that the teachers' average wage fell between January and December 1983 from JD125 to JD87. (They earned between JD109 and JD145 in January and JD76 to JD101

in December.

On December 15, 1983, the military authorities' statistical bureau reported that the expenses for an average six-member family are currently IS\$65,100 (JD210). The government school teachers have been demanding action on salaries since the most recent economic downturn last September. Last month, Shlomo Elia, head of the West Bank's 'civil administration', promised teachers a 15 percent increase as of February 1984.

The teachers' statement rejected this increase and repeated the demand for a 100 percent increase.



The wife of Ismail Mahariq stands before the debris of her destroyed home in the village of Samu'. Israeli military authorities also destroyed two houses in Yatta and in Tarqumia, January 10-11, on the pretext that the homes were built without licenses.

Major Destruction Campaign in Hebron Area

The Hebron area town of Yatta remains tense after the demolition of two houses, January 10. The military authorities said the houses were unlicensed.

A two-storey building comprising four flats belonging to Said Yousef Abu Aram and a two-room house belonging to Jaber Khalil Masri in the Marj Dadeh area, near Yatta, were bulldozed by a squad of Israeli troops who arrived in Yatta at 11:00 am. Family sources said the soldiers ordered the 18 members of the two families out of their homes and set about the demolition immediately.

When a young man from

the Abu Aram family started stoning them, the troops fired tear gas and declared a curfew. The families were not allowed to remove furniture or personal effects, they reported. The operation took three hours.

Mukhat Mohammed Shehadeh Abu Aram told *Al Fajr* that people living outside Yatta municipal borders, were ordered to apply to the Ramallah military zoning department for licenses. He said Said and Jaber applied eight months ago but received no answer.

Abu Aram added that the general atmosphere in Yatta is tense because of the demolition

and that construction is at a standstill.

Israeli bulldozers destroyed three houses belonging to Palestinian residents from the villages of Samu' and Tarqumia, in the Hebron district, January 11, on the pretext that they were built without a license.

The two houses in Samu', belonging to Ibrahim Salim Hawamdeh, and Isma'il Ali Mahariq, were built four years ago. The third house belonged to Abd al-Qadr Yunis Abu Sakur, from Tarqumia. His four-room concrete block house was built two years ago. The homeowners are now staying with relatives.

New Hebron City Grab Imminent

"The Israeli government appears intent on approving a plan to move the wholesale market in Hebron in order to reconstruct the Jewish quarter there.

"A special meeting of senior cabinet ministers scheduled to discuss the plan, January 16, was called off at the last moment, because Prime Minister Yitzhak Shamir and several colleagues went to the funeral of Sa'ad Haddad in Marjayoun.

"A senior government aide said that the meeting had in fact been planned as a response to political pressures from the settlers and as something of a sop to them in view of their mounting criticism over planned cuts in the budget for settlement in (the West Bank). "Nothing will be done, because there is no money," the aide said.

"The government approved the reconstruction of the Jewish quarter in principle in 1981, but delayed its implementation because of political pressures within the coalition. A thicket of legal problems also required an extensive examination by the justice ministry, but these apparently have now been resolved.

"The plan, drawn up by the

settlers together with Housing Ministry planners, calls for the expansion of the already existing Jewish presence concentrated around the restored Avraham Avinu Synagogue to include an area now serving as the Hebron fruit and vegetable market. The Arab merchants would be relocated in a new market, although land has not yet been specifically allocated for this purpose...

"One of the legal options now open to the government and the settlers is to have the army or even the municipality (now run by an Israeli staff officer following the dismissal of the mayor and council) build the block of 24 apartments envisaged by the planners.

"Compensating the Arab merchants and relocating them elsewhere would cost some US\$1.6 million, according to defence ministry officials.

"Rabbi Moshe Levinger, the leader of the Jewish return to Hebron, is reported to have left for the US to raise funds for the project.

"The Israeli Labour Party's Yossi Sarid and Mapam's Victor Shemtov demanded that the Foreign Affairs and Defence Committee discuss the government's plan. They said there is a clear majority in the committee against seizing the Hebron market area for building Jewish apartments."

(Reprint: The Jerusalem Post, January 17, 1984).

Zamir Shemesh, the Israeli officer who took over the Hebron municipality following the dismissal of Mustafa Natshe, had withdrawn a law suit in the Israeli High Court. The case, which had been taken by mayor Natshe, protested against the Israeli army and settlers demolitions of houses within the market area.

The Siniora family, their relatives and friends in Jerusalem and the staff of *Al Fajr* mourn the untimely death of

Alfred Siniora

In San Francisco and extend condolences to his widow, Jeannette, and children.

Galilee Cell Jailed

Seven young Palestinians from Arrabeh in the Galilee were sentenced, January 8, to between 18 months and five years in prison on charges of belonging to a local organisation and acts of resistance.

After 10 sessions, the Central Court in Haifa sentenced Omar Meri Na'amneh, 20, and Isma'il Mohammed Na'amneh, 19, to five years jail and three years suspended; Ali A. Na'amneh, 20, to four years with three suspended; Khaled Mohammed Najjar, 20, received two years and two suspended; and Ali Hassan Na'amneh, 19, and Sami Ahmad Na'amneh, 18, got 18 months in prison with 14 suspended.

The seven young men formed a local organisation they named the Popular Front-Arrabeh in mid-1982. They were arrested in April 1983.

The Israeli prosecutor said

they tried to damage state property and wound or kill Israelis in revenge for what happened to Palestinians during Israel's invasion of Lebanon.

They were also accused of setting fire to tyres on roads leading to Israeli settlements in the Galilee. A water pipe was also damaged with an old bomb, they said.

On September 5, 1983, Palestinian flags were hoisted on electric pylons in Arrabeh village. The Arrabeh youths were also accused of torching a tomb belonging to Maccabees.

The youth's three lawyers said in their defence that the group neither had a strategic objective such as the establishment of a Palestinian state nor

established contacts with any organisation outside. Mohammed Na'amneh, one of the lawyers, told *Al Fajr* that the three judges seemed not to understand the significance of this point and insisted in describing them as a "terrorist organisation." The judges said that the young men contravened the religious provisions by burning the Maccabees tomb.

The three Palestinian lawyers gave examples of contraventions practised by Israelis against Christian and Islamic religious places.

Lawyers Wakim Wakim, Hussein Abu Hussein and Mohammed Na'amneh stressed that the massacres committed against the Palestinians in Lebanon and particularly the Sabra and Shatila massacre created a severe and tense atmosphere among Palestinians here.

Settlers Want Old City Expansion

Settlers are trying to expand their grip on the Old City of Jerusalem. The *Atara Leyoshana* organisation, an Israeli registered charity which backs the Birkat Avraham yeshiva whose members regularly assault Palestinian neighbours, were reported by Israeli papers, January 13, to be seeking to build inside the walls near Herod's Gate. The land they want to build on is owned by the Orthodox Palestine Society, the secular arm of the White Russian church.

A senior church official told *Al Fajr* that the Orthodox society has complained to the Israeli minister of justice and to the President of the Orthodox Palestine Society in New York. The church official also sent a letter to the Israeli papers which reported the story pointing out that "according to its statutes the Orthodox Palestine Society has no right to sell and doesn't intend to sell their land." The society also noted in their letter to the Israeli editors that "the Society has never negotiated with *Atara Leyoshana* for any deal."

According to *The Jerusalem Post* report "an internal *Atara Leyoshana* document de-

tails plans for the construction of 28 flats on that spot. The *Atara Leyoshana* document claims that the land has already been bought by the Israel Lands Administration and that the association would 'get' the plot by unspecified means, *The Post* reported.

In another report in the Israeli daily *HaAretz*, January 16, a member of *Atara Leyoshana* said, "We are saving the land like the Jewish National Fund did before the creation of the State." The anonymous member confirmed his associations' plans to get hold of land in the Old City and that the Jerusalem municipality had "encouraged and aided their society in the beginning."

Jerusalem Mayor Teddy Kollek is reported to have complained that the increased Jewish settlement in the Old City "would increase the tension between Arabs and Jews."

The *Atara Leyoshana* ("Restore the Crown") has among its members the rabbi of the Jewish Quarter, Rabbi Nebentza, and the Shephardic Chief Rabbi of Israel Mordechai Eliyahu. (Translation: *The Jerusalem Post*, HaAretz, January 13 and 16, 1984.)

Israel's Inflation 190.7%

Israel's inflation rate for the 1983 calendar year reached 190.7 percent according to official figures from the Central Bureau of Statistics, released January 15. Meanwhile, conflict between workers and the authorities over inflation compensation broke out into open strikes while the Israeli cabinet continued its inability to decide budget cuts.

The Bureau announced an 11.6 percent inflation rate for December, slightly lower than expected, which brought the annual rate to its new record high. Inflation in the last three months of 1983 was 55.7 percent, virtually double the rate for earlier quarters. The experts say they expect this rate to continue for the foreseeable future and that inflation for the first half of January is seven percent.

The breakdown of commodities shows that fresh fruit and vegetables increased at significantly less than the average but staple foods - break, milk, cooking oil - went up by 210 percent over the year. The bureau estimated that the basic expenditure of poor families is rising faster than that of the wealthy.

Israeli civil service workers struck for two hours, January 15, demanding compensation for the erosion in their salaries. The dispute was organised by the trade union branch of the Histadrut. The government employees say the standard 85 percent of the price index to which their wages are linked, paid quarterly, is inadequate and demanded pay rises. Negotiations between Histadrut representatives and finance minister Cohen-Orgad broke down, January 12, with the treasury offering lower paid workers a \$4000 boost and the workers' representatives holding out for an across-the-board \$5200 hike. There are continuing go-slows in several government departments which are severely disrupting work. The business section of the Histadrut, Israel's second larg-



Israel's 'inflation' minister Yigal Cohen-Orgad appears to be in control of at least negotiations with Histadrut leader Yeroham Meshel.

est employer, paid an advance on the cost-of-living increase due in February to its workers, last month.

Postal and train workers went on open strike, January 15, as part of their pressure for higher wages. Post office workers say they are the lowest paid civil servants and stopped all work. Local council workers are also expected to strike over non-payment of salaries.

Meanwhile, the cabinet has still not reached an agreement about cuts in the budget. The ministerial economic committee abandoned, January 11, an earlier plan to slash nine percent from all ministries after the small Tami party said it would walk out of the ruling coalition if more than five percent was taken from the social affairs ministry it controls.

A decision was made to slash \$12 billion from the defence budget and \$48 billion from other ministries - \$30 billion of it will be raised through service charges. Most of the proposed cuts are in the area of subsidies. The decision was made, however, without consulting Defence Minister Arens or ailing

Education Minister Zeveulun Hammer. Both rejected the cuts and negotiations continue.

West Bank settlers representatives met Cohen-Orgad, January 16, to try to persuade him to reduce the alleged 25 percent deduction in their budget. They say 12 settlements will have to be frozen. The same day 4000 Histadrut labour officials demonstrated outside Premier Yitzhak Shamir's home against what they say has been the 30 percent erosion in salaries over the past three months. Small defence ministry suppliers broke into its Tel Aviv offices to protest non-payment of debts.

Civil servants stopped work for three-and-a-half hours, January 17, following the breakdown of talks between their representatives and the government the day before.

Finance Minister Cohen-Orgad announced, January 16, that Israelis with foreign bank accounts - there are 45 of them according to official Bank of Israel records - must liquidate them and further reduced the amount of foreign currency Israelis can hold to US\$2000.

WB Lawyer Slams Israeli Human Rights Report

Ramallah-based jurist Jonathan Kuttub and Gaza physician Dr. Hatem Abu Ghazaleh criticised the International Centre for Peace in the Middle East's recent report on human rights in the occupied territories for dodging political issues and ignoring aspects of the problem. They were speaking at a Tel Aviv public meeting January 13 to discuss the report.

Around 200 Israelis showed up at Tel Aviv's Tzafra Theatre to hear the discussion chaired by former Supreme Court judge Haim Cohen, honorary chairman of ICPME.

The head of the ICPME research team which produced the report dealing with 1979-1983, David Zucker, opened the meeting with a quick summary of the report. He focussed on the plight of the 100,000 Palestinian black labourers in Israel, collective punishment and the special laws affecting treatment received by Israeli settlers in the West Bank and Gaza Strip.

Kuttub welcomed the Israeli effort but called it "inadequate." Kuttub was very critical of "Israeli liberals who began to criticise Israeli policy in the occupied territories only after (Menachem) Begin was elected as prime minister," despite the fact that "the bases for the oppressive policies were established and carried out under the Labour governments since 1967."

It praised the report for revealing information regarding Palestinian labourers in Israel but attacked it for not dealing with political problems. "Although the report was done for political reasons it failed to deal with important political questions like the Palestinians' right

to return and to determine their future," he said. He demanded the Israeli research team set universally acceptable criteria for their research and follow them consistently. Kuttub added that a number of quotes in the human rights study were identical to apologetic statements made in Israeli military government reports but no reference to these reports was made. He also noted that the major topics of land and water rights were completely ignored.

Dr. Hatem Abu Ghazaleh told the Israeli audience that Gazans are "ignored and forgotten about."

"The situation in the Gaza Strip is desperate - all our rights are taken away and the freedom we get is based on the grace of our occupiers," he said, pointing out that Israeli occupation officers in Gaza have been in office too long and "oppression doesn't bother them."

He said that occupation restrictions reach every sector of Gazans' lives. He quoted a recent law dealing with charitable societies: "No society is allowed to render services to the public without prior permission of the authorities."

The Gaza medical man said that the Israeli authorities refused permission for the construction of a private hospital, have barred expansion of institutions for the mentally handicapped and the services of existing medical societies are being sharply curtailed.

Abu Ghazaleh asked Judge Cohen to set up a committee of Israeli Knesset members to visit the Strip to pursue the issue of the granting of basic freedoms in education and culture. Judge Cohen did not publicly respond to the plea.

The Dawn

AL FAJR

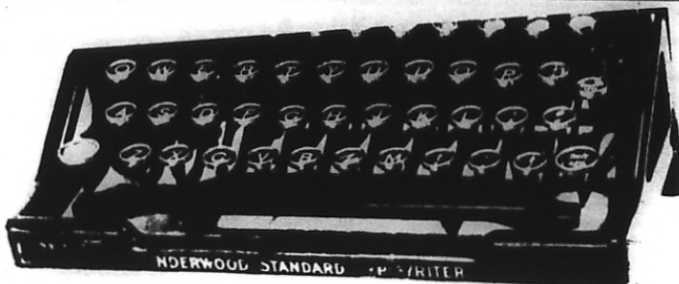
AL FAJR — Jerusalem Palestinian Weekly

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Al Fajr was founded in 1972 by Yusef Nasr, who edited the paper until his kidnapping in 1974. The English edition was first published in April 1980. The Dawn (Al Fajr) Jerusalem Palestinian Weekly (UPS 686630) is published weekly for \$40.00 per year by Paul Ajlouny, 16 Crowell St., Hempstead, N.Y. 11550. Second class postage paid at Hempstead, N.Y.
POSTMASTER: Send address changes to Al Fajr 2025 I Street N.W., Suite 925, Washington D.C., 20006.



Work Ethics of the Western Media

by John Richardson

Proper Protection Required

A grenade was detonated outside the bungalow of a Russian Orthodox nun at her convent in Ain Karem, January 15. Israeli police say it was "miraculous" she escaped without injury. The same church group was a target of more than one such terrorist incident in the recent past.

Earlier booby-trapped army-issue grenades had exploded outside two mosques in Hebron, December 30, injuring an imam. Terror Against Terror (coded TNT) claimed responsibility and threatened more such acts. In previous weeks other mosques and churches in more than one occupied Palestinian city were subject to similar acts. An imam and a nun were wounded, December 20.

In Palestine, also known as the holy land, religious sites and places have always been treated with due sanctity whatever power ruled the country.

Umar Ben al-Kattab, the second Muslim Caliph, who visited Jerusalem after victorious Muslim troops cleared the land from the rule of the Romans in the early decades of the seventh century, set the model. He showed the victorious Muslims how other religious sites should be treated by refusing to pray in the Christian Holy Sepulchre lest it lead to religious conflicts in the future. Caliph Omar extended his protection to the holy places of the other two monotheistic religions.

Muslims, Christians and Jews lived peacefully from that time until the Zionists started exploiting the Jewish religion to serve their ideology. Zionist terror groups used all means to destroy evidence and marks of a non-Jewish presence in Palestine.

After the 1967 Israeli occupation of the West Bank, al-Aqsa Mosque in Jerusalem and al-Ibrahimi in Hebron were singled out. More than 70 percent of Hebron's holy mosque was closed to Muslims. Al-Aqsa has been the target of more than 100 sabotage attempts. The two largest were the 1968 burning where the perpetrator was first declared insane and then set free after conviction and the indiscriminate shooting of worshippers in 1982.

The recent attacks on mosques and churches indicate that the Israeli government cannot provide adequate security for holy sites. Proper and more appropriate protection must be established.

AL FAJR — Jerusalem Palestinian Weekly

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The world is presently gulping down every fresh detail reports can provide on King Hussein's decision to bring together his living parliamentarians and take a crack at becoming a regional power broker by trying to strong-arm the PLO. Remarkably, analysts and commentators in the Western media see the whole thing as a *fait accompli* and are already speculating about the next moves towards a Reagan plan-based settlement of the Palestinian question.

To this end there has been an unprecedented degree of blindness about regional reality — most particularly when predicting the reaction of the West Bank to the manoeuvres of their erstwhile and would-be monarch. Things have come to such a pass that one BBC reporter speaking from Amman even commented to the effect that 'West Bankers want PLO Chairman Yasir Arafat to come to Amman now or they will go their own way.' Israel Radio, which admittedly has its own clear political biases, prefaced comments by Bethlehem Mayor Elias Freij by labelling him 'the most pro-Jordan figure on the West Bank.' Both these statements are ridiculous and unfounded.

Some West Bankers certainly want Yasir Arafat to approach King Hussein immediately and a few of these see a Reagan plan approach as the favoured next move, but there's no evidence — statements to the press, the ubiquitous advertisements in local papers, popular demonstrations, etc. — or even claims by named figures, that this view is anything other than a minority opinion with little popular currency. As for Mayor Freij, the degree of his support for Jordan is his affair, but to describe him as the most pro-Jordan figure on the West Bank, at a time when people were packing bags to go and sit in the King's parliament, is clearly wrong.

The question here is not what they say, however, but why. The answer is two-fold; first the propensity among Western journalists for reporting what their own editors want to see and second, the natural difficulty of reporting 'the mood' of an area under military occupation.

Western governments have never admitted that the PLO represents Palestinians. They have never respected the Palestinians' democratic representative structures. Naturally the pro-government media in these countries — the only ones rich enough to send employees here permanently — are not in such circumstances going to mount a campaign to correct this basic and politically motivated confusion. Their journalists' first allegiance is to their editors' wishes, not to some abstract idea of 'truth', and they are even less likely to undertake a lone campaign hemmed in as they are by daily deadlines and the pre-eminence of 'official statements' and 'reliable' (i.e. regime) sources in the value scale of the trade.

The combined effect of this is that government officials read an 'objective reality' on the news pages of their countries' papers that closely reflects the assumptions of their policies. Of course minority voices are sometimes let through — Nadia Hijab, editor of *The Middle East* magazine, has been a lonely voice of reason in recent broadcasts — but these are easily drowned by the combined weight of

on-the-spot correspondents' reports, commentaries and statements by senior officials of home governments and those of their allies and editorials and Op Ed pieces in the same journals.

On the other hand, even a pro-Palestinian journalist has problems with gauging the mood on the West Bank. There are no forums under military rule for free expression or exchange of ideas, no "official" sources of any kind and even opinion polls have to be carried out in conditions of great secrecy. Thus, to genuinely reflect opinion here, something *Al Fajr* tries to do, reporters need several and varied contacts who are willing to speak openly to them. Virtually no foreigner employed by a major journal has the time to do this. Who among the Israel correspondents has time to cultivate trust and confidence at a time when editors are screaming for news of a war to the north, economic and social collapse within and the political shenanigans of the West's hit-man in the region. This, coupled with editorial and official hostility, means a conscientious reporter has to take short-cuts and help cook the books.

Naturally, the editor back home is going to be overjoyed to see snappy quotes backing their world view. Therefore there is a tendency to gravitate to the pro-Western for comments — Mayor X is thus seen constantly while Mayor Y is ignored. If Mayor X is easily accessible from Jerusalem and Tel Aviv so much the better. At the same time they are thrown onto whatever "officials" they can lay their hands on — in this case the military authorities, Israeli politicians and commentators of left or right, Israeli journalists operating in the occupied territories regardless of their motivations and links.

In this vicious circle the voice of the 'man-in-the-camp' or the street is, of course, irrelevant.

By and large, this technical misrepresentation is not so important, but at a time like the present it takes on silly or even sinister proportions. Almost inevitably the present huffing-and-puffing will burst the artificial bubble, for nothing here has really changed — the US still shows no sign that it wants to face Middle East realities, the *Eretz Israelites* still run the Jewish state, military repression or no there are no signs of the Palestinians giving up independent representation or forgetting the day-to-day realities of Jordanian rule and there's been no firm indication that the Amman regime wants to take on, once more, the central role in the harsh repression of Palestinian national aspirations. Presumably then, editors and politicians will fulminate once more against 'Hussein's weakness' or 'Arafat's impotence'.

Last time their roundabout broke down, 'Syrian-backed' groups in the PLO were heavily blamed — it turned out later that in fact the real 'Syrian-backed' Palestinians were technically in the 'moderate' camp when the PLO-Hussein dialogue stopped and the ones so labelled still support Yasir Arafat's leadership. If they stick with the same slogans — and Western leaders are remarkably loyal to the silliest of labels — it will be interesting to see who they finger as the 'Syrian-backed West Bankers.'

AL FAJR invites our readers to contribute letters, articles and opinions. Contributions must be signed, but names may be withheld upon request.

We are going through one of the most harrowing periods in our painful history. Perhaps the most poignant aspect of the current situation is the interethnic fighting and mutual recriminations in our ranks. We, as a people, have stood for decades against powerful enemies and stoically suffered the vicissitudes and strife among our closest Arab allies. The sight of Palestinian firing on Palestinian causes sorrow and shame that far transcends our usual disgust at the sometimes vicious manoeuvrings of enfeebled Arab states.

Palestinian unity is a rare bloom in this torn vista, and like a flower it is not only beautiful to behold but serves a vital function. Certainly the fusion of leaders and people has in the past confounded all assaults from whatever quarter. Even the most empty-headed global planner has been forced to redesign regional plans in the face of this, for them, inexplicable phenomenon.

"We Must Move Forward Together or Not at All"

by Ali Shahwan



Unity is now under strain. Some are accused of wanting to pluck the bloom to parade it as a butterfly, others are said to want to bulldoze it down in heavy-handed attempts to force crass

theories on an involuted Middle East reality. We here can only impress on our compatriots the dire situation in which we live, our intense discomfort at the image of unity is enough to confound

possible ruinous alterations and our hope that the present confusion will be directed to strengthening unity. The Western salon-theorists. The reality of unity is essential if our leaders, diplomats and spokespeople are to move forward confidently in the promotion of our cause.

Our unity will never be a tool or an appendage. Forged in the retort of reality, fuelled by democratic debate and decision, unity is the essential vehicle to our common goal. No alchemist can transmute it, no technician modify it. We move forward together or not at all.

There have been disgraceful acts committed recently and wounding accusations laid. Fortunately, the fundamental structures and basic aims remain. It remains for us to consolidate our forces, to reaffirm our dedication to justice and to move on.



A Fateful Moment for Both Sides

by Yehuda Ben Moshe



The departure of Arafat loyalists from Tripoli closed a sad chapter in Palestinian history. "The legitimate cause of Palestinian nationalism has not been destroyed..."

In the life of nations, as in the life of an individual, moments of fateful significance suddenly occur, often unforeseen. If those people and nations happen to grasp this call of fate, as for instance the fate of Anwar Sadat and Menachem Begin in November 1977, the result may be a great step forward in their lives and histories. If they lack this clear insight and initiative, the fateful moment would be lost forever.

Israel and the Palestinian national movement have now arrived at such a point in their relationship.

It may be natural that together with other enemies of Palestinian independence, not a few of them within the Arab world, many Israelis hoped that neither the PLO, nor at least an essential part of it, nor its acknowledged leader Yasir Arafat, would live through the assaults on the Beqa'a and Tripoli.

Indeed there can be no question that the fratricide between various Palestinian organisations and even between different members of Fatah itself, many of them openly supported by the Syrian Ba'athist leadership, greatly harmed the

cause of Palestinian national aspirations. In fact more than a few Palestinians I spoke with during the past few months called most of the persons involved in these miserable calamities "traitors to the Palestinian national cause." I have to admit that for mainly humanitarian reasons I myself was disgusted by this brutal method of resolving internal Palestinian problems endangering the lives and property of almost half a million innocent citizens of Tripoli.

But now this unfortunate chapter of recent Palestinian history is closed. And Yasir Arafat, at the head of some 4000 Fatah fighters, has once more showed his impressive talent for survival. Despite the substantial weakening of Palestinian military force as a result of the second forced exodus from Lebanon, this time from Tripoli, the legitimate cause of Palestinian nationalism has not been destroyed and is by now strong enough in the international political reality as to force even Israel's present government to deal with it one way or another.

How, indeed, is the government of Israel dealing with the present fateful situation? As an Israeli (and a Zionist) myself, I am roused to deep indignation by seeing the strongest military power

of this region busy with protesting against any Arab, European or any other government that meets Palestinian leaders or displays any kind of political support for Palestinian nationalism alongside (their backing for) Israel's undoubted and well-established existence. Where can such a sterile and unrealistic attitude by my government lead to finally except mounting estrangement from every important international element? What is the wisdom of a powerful government ridiculously 'calling other nations to order' instead of displaying constructive and realistic political initiatives to end the conflict? Shouldn't the continuing Lebanese fiasco cause the government of Israelis (widely imagined to be clever people) to at long last learn the Lebanese lesson of 1943 when the formerly dominant Christian-Maronite element insisted on rule in a country whose growing non-Christian majority could never be effectively compelled to surrender?

Is it still unclear to any reasonable Israeli that even after the 'smashing' victory of our arms in Lebanon and at the potential price of adding a problematic "North Bank" to the burdensome West Bank, the crucial issue of legitimate Palestinian nationalism has simply become an integral part of Middle Eastern reality?

"Not by might, nor by power, but by my spirit, saith the Lord of hosts." (Zacharia 4:6)

In the deplorable case that Yasir Arafat and PLO fighters of various loyalties should now try to return to militant, inhuman and self-defeating warfare or terrorism (like the attack on a civilian bus in Jerusalem some weeks ago), they will only unite all Israelis to fight back by all available means. And the courageous unique disassociation of some important Palestinian personalities from this abominable crime shows that this kind of doubtful tactic is losing popularity also with a growing number of intelligent patriotic Palestinians.

On the other side, if the present military government of Israel continues the policy of establishing facts all over the West Bank, right in the centre of Nablus, besides continued evasion of dealing with the fundamental issue of Palestinian self-determination, the fatal conflict will continue growing, perhaps with even non-conventional ferocity.

Surely the time has come for both sides to stop and think profoundly, before it is too late.

Yehuda Ben Moshe is a former mayor of the Israeli town of Eilat. He works as a tourist guide and writer.



Pay Attention to Sports!

To the Editor,

I read your newspaper periodically and am interested in it very much. During the time I've been reading it, I've not seen any reports on sporting activities in our country. I request that you pay close attention to this subject in view of its interest — we know sport creates good will between nations in the first place and contributes to the atmosphere in our country and between our people.

Since we have no TV and radio stations to talk about it, the only way to acquaint foreigners with the subject is through the newspapers, especially an English newspaper.

Thus, we can count on your newspaper to take up your responsibilities in regards to this subject.

Samih Sweity

Beit Awwa

December 31, 1983

AL FAJR invites our readers to contribute letters, articles and opinions. Contributions must be signed, but names may be withheld upon request.

Nasir Aruri-

The Cairo Visit: A Strategy to the Right

by Ghassan Bishara
Our Washington, DC Correspondent

Professor Nasir Aruri teaches at Northeastern University in Massachusetts and was last year's president of the Association of Arab-American University Graduates. This interview was conducted shortly after PLO Chairman Yasir Arafat's controversial visit to Cairo, late last year, and his meeting with President Mubarak.

Q: Are you in support of or against PLO Chairman Yasir Arafat's visit to Cairo, and why?

A: I am skeptical about the prospects for political settlement of the Palestine question in relation to Chairman Arafat's visit to Cairo. My reservations do not derive from a blanket rejection of any ties with Egypt, which, after all, is the centre of gravity in the Arab world. They are based on my assessment of the regional and global balance of power and the existing diplomatic and military realities, which do not favour the Palestinian cause.

If Arafat's visit were to promote a just and honourable settlement in consonance with the Arab and international consensus of the Palestinian-Israeli conflict, I would applaud it, but unfortunately that settlement is not now and has not been for a long time, in the offing. There are at least three factors which impede the prospects for reconciliation:

1. There is virtually no pressure on the Shamir government, internal or external, to reverse its annexationist course in the West Bank and Gaza. The Israeli opposition party is beset with a leadership crisis, and its most generous offer would be a division of the West Bank between Israel and Jordan.

2. The Arab world is currently in a state of political paralysis, torn by internal conflicts and faced with leadership crises and economic difficulties. Its capacity for diplomatic bargaining is seriously constrained.

3. The Reagan administration does not view the Palestine question as the principal destabilizing issue in the region. It has finally accepted the Israeli thesis that the Palestinian question is a secondary issue, which must not interfere with the special relationship between a superpower and a strategic ally. Reagan sees the Arab-Israeli conflict in East-West terms, a part of a common struggle against the Soviet Union. While Israel is seen as pivotal in a crusade against social change, the Arab regimes are perceived as weak and vulnerable internally and externally, with nothing to offer. In the American view, these Arab regimes are not a bulwark in the face of international communism but instead a liability. In view of the above, the political environment is not suitable for a settlement of the Middle East conflict.

Q: What Arab or global consensus are you referring to?

A: The elements of these consensuses are the necessity of Israeli withdrawal from all occupied Arab territories, the right of the Palestinian people to self-determination to participation in any forum for the discussion of the Palestine question and to designate their own representatives. The visit to Cairo signifies a possible abandonment by Arafat of a Palestinian state.

Q: Are you assuming that Arafat's visit is in pursuit of a lasting, comprehensive solution, rather than of a temporary objective?

A: Well, if the objective was temporary, then the visit was a tactical manoeuvre designed to attain short-term benefits such as the political survival of Arafat — to enable him to remain relevant and to recoup his political standing within the Arab world. In that case, I would have to say that he is a good tactician but a poor strategist. Long-term objectives might be sacrificed for narrow considerations.

Q: Had Arafat consulted with the Fatah Central Committee or with the PLO Executive Committee, would your acceptance of the visit have been different than it is now?

A: No. That might have been the correct thing to do procedurally, but it is the substance of the visit and what it denotes and signifies that should be a matter of concern to all those committed to Arab liberation.

The lack of consultation is indeed very serious. Here you have the chairman of the PNC accusing Arafat of having flaunted PNC resolutions and therefore having "lost his legitimacy." Then, Salah Khalaf (Abu Iyad) is quoted as saying that Arafat alone must bear the responsibility for that visit — while Habash and Hawatmeh called on Arafat to resign. This is an ominous development in a movement which was able to pride itself on being cohesive and democratic. The visit has already exacerbated the ongoing divisiveness in the PLO.

The immediate significance of this visit is that it is in line with a gradual shift in political alliances within the Arab world. That shift began towards the end of 1977 when the Arab consensus on the requisites for peace was challenged by Sadat's death and Mubarak's ascendancy. Jordan and the Gulf states modified their priorities and began to look towards Egypt as a bulwark against resurgent Islam, particularly in the wake of the Iran-Iraq war.

Over the past five years, we have witnessed a gradual coalescing of the political right and center in the Arab world. The significance of the Arafat visit to Egypt is that it will further bridge the gap between them and will bestow some respectability upon the Arab right, which incorrectly believes in America's willingness and ability to deliver a settlement. The trip to Cairo could make Arafat a catalyst in forging closer ties between the Arab right and centre through the reintegration of Egypt into the Arab world. Having had his showdown with the Fatah opposition and with Syria, Arafat will not now have to walk the tightrope which he traditionally did since 1970 in order to preserve PLO unity and secure Arab support. He may no longer have to continue to be wrapped up in that coat of many ideological colourings, enunciating anti-imperialist slogans in Moscow and at non-aligned conferences and conducting himself as a cautious, moderate if not conservative, stability-oriented politician in Europe and at the United Nations.

I think that he will have to make clear in the near future where he stands.

While in Tripoli, he was supported by the Islamic right and he fought against the Lebanese Communists. Egypt and Jordan extended a helping hand, and his departure was guaranteed by France and the United States.

So Arafat's trip is in line with the shift in political alliances within the Arab world. But the centre-right alliance is less likely to produce a political settlement of the Palestine question now than it was in the 1970s at the height of Arab economic-financial power, when it was capable of producing such a settlement.

Q: Arafat's supporters and possibly himself argue that Khaled al-Fahoum is an instrument in the Syrian government's hands — Syria, the government which forced Arafat out of Lebanon. What would you say to those arguing this point?

A: Al-Fahoum was not the only one who criticised Arafat's visit. It is difficult to accuse Salah Khalaf, George Habash and Nayef Hawatmeh of being pro-Syrian. In fact Habash and Hawatmeh had some harsh words for the Abu Musa group during the tragic conflict in and around the Baddawi and Nahr al-Bared camps. We cannot really say that criticism of the visit was limited to "Syrian operatives."

Q: Arafat's visit has also been criticised from a policy point of view, considering relations between Israel and Egypt. Do you see any relevance to these views?

A: Of course I do. There is no question that the entire Arab world, since 1978, condemned the Camp David affair, and at least one of the decisions of the Baghdad conference of 1978 was to ban trade with Egypt. The main point I am making here is that this was done for the sake of the Palestinian people. It was for the sake of the Palestinian people that the Arab world decided at the Baghdad summit in 1978 to ban trade with Egypt. Arafat's visit to Cairo signals a desire to normalise relations with Egypt. The Arab world would now ask — "Why should we continue the ban since Arafat has decided to violate Arab League and PNC resolutions?" In a way, Arafat, by his visit, exempted the Arab governments from all or some of their obligations to the Palestinian cause.

Q: Arafat supporters argue that Egypt was most helpful during the '82 war and the Tripoli fighting, supplying the PLO with military aid and diplomatic backing, thus Arafat's visit did not take place in a vacuum. What is your view of this?

A: Well, Egypt may have been supportive of Arafat when he was under siege in northern Lebanon but we must keep in mind that Egypt represents one extreme on the ideological spectrum of the Arab world, and Syria represents the other extreme. I agree that Arafat's visit must be seen in the context of this inter-Arab conflict, but that kind of Egyptian support to one faction in the Palestinian movement cannot possibly outweigh the

damage dealt to the common Palestinian cause by Sadat in 1977. In 1977 there was a train which was heading to Geneva and Anwar Sadat derailed that train by signing the Camp David accords, in which the rights of the Palestinians were demoted from self-determination to autonomy. Egypt was simply exploiting an internal Palestinian conflict and the Syrian-Palestinian conflict.

Q: Do you see the visit as possibly widening the gap between Egypt and Israel — or drawing Arafat and the PLO to Mubarak's views, or neither?

A: I really think the latter. The PLO is coming closer to Egypt. I do not see that this rapprochement is going to create a serious rift between Egypt and Israel. After all, if Egypt were to denounce its peace treaty with Israel I would say well and good. But I do not think that Egypt is in a position to renounce Camp David. If it were to do it, then I would say hoorah for Arafat. But I do not think he could bring that about. On the contrary, I think that Arafat's visit to Egypt may have hastened the reintegration of Egypt into the Arab world, strengthening, therefore, the forces that have been hoping for a US-sponsored diplomatic solution. Kamal Hassan Ali, the Egyptian foreign minister, stated in Washington recently that he now understands that the strategic pact between Israel and the United States does not pose a danger, nor is it inconsistent with Egyptian perceptions of what US policy should be.

Q: Arafat supporters argue that after the second departure of the PLO from Lebanon in 15 months, Arafat needed to do something dramatic to salvage Palestinian rights and regain the initiative in the Middle East. Do you think the visit has done that?

A: I am for regaining the initiative, but I do not think that the picture will change a great deal by something Arafat is likely to do or not, nowadays. However, there is one thing that Arafat could do — but which obviously will not be acceptable to the Palestinian people — that could make a change: if he were to accept Camp David. I do not think that there is anything really offered the Palestinians and the Arabs, except Camp David. I have already outlined the factors which militate against a fair and just political settlement.

Q: Do you read Arafat's visit to Cairo as a trend within the Palestinian movement, this being the first step in that trend? If not, do you expect Arafat to go back to Amman to continue the dialogue with King Hussein to reach some solution?

A: Yes, I expect Arafat and Hussein to explore the "association" clause in the Reagan plan. I think that Arafat's trip to Cairo sent a clear signal to Jordan that the obstacles to a Jordanian-Palestinian understanding, which existed last April have disappeared. I think that it confirms that the PLO is hopelessly

continued on page 15



Jerusalem-born artist Kamal Boullata has launched an exhibition of his distinctive serigraphs which will tour major cities. He spoke to Nancy Jimison of *Al Fajr* in Washington, DC, at the start of the tour, about his life and work and his feelings about the prospect of visiting his home town for the first time in 15 years.

KAMAL BOULLATA:

"THE LEVEL OF ART AMONG PALESTINIANS SHOULD REACH THE LEVEL OF THE PEOPLES' STRUGGLE TO SURVIVE"

Palestinian artist Kamal Boullata is currently exhibiting his serigraphs at the Alif Gallery in Washington, DC. After the show closes it will move on to several major cities in the Middle East, North Africa and Europe before returning to the US.

Proceeds from these exhibitions are going to a scholarship fund that has been established by the American Palestine Education Foundation. Two scholarships are planned: one for the study of art — graphic art, painting, sculpture or any of the studio arts — and another for the study of art restoration, including the restoration of mosaics, icons or ceramics.

Kamal Boullata's art breathes an air of calm, quiet spirituality. Some describe his prints as incandescent — colours merging and changing as we watch, a mirage of shifting words.

"Yes, that's what I intended," Boullata exclaims. He moves closer to the painting and points to a trail of paint. "The line you saw as yellow is actually not yellow at all." Boullata traces his finger along this mysterious line, and as he does it seems to change to an ever deeper shade of lavender, yet he assures us that it is the same paint. "It is the background colours which make it seem to change."

Each of Boullata's paintings is a word or series of words of Arabic calligraphy, his way of expressing his Arab heritage, and "the symbiotic relationship between the Arabic language and the expressive modes of its visual manifestation." However, Boullata's work not only creates a union of modern art and traditional Arab art, but even more, is a fusion of the meaning of words and their pictorial representation.

We spoke to Kamal Boullata shortly after his show opened in Washington about his life and his art.

Boullata: Before I went to Italy to study I used to sell my artwork on the streets of Jerusalem to pilgrims and others. The first space in which some of my work was exhibited was a bookstore that was run by Michel Sahhar, of Bab al-Sahira. He sold my work while I was still a schoolboy at St. George's. Later on, through the help of people who were buying my work, Arab residents of Jerusalem, I was able to go to Italy and study. Then every year I would pay for the next year through the sale of my work. Those four years in Italy were financially stressful on me, though of course my family helped however they could.

I would like to create the same opportunity for others that I have been

fortunate enough to have. I do not think it is generous, I think it is more that what has been done for me I would like to offer to others, with the hope that they would in turn be open to help others.

Al Fajr: Since there's no Palestinian government to give grants,...

A: Well, we cannot exist without our own institutions that actually help individuals. I am not a rich man, I do not have money, I still struggle with my own art as I have struggled all through my life, but I cannot wait to be rich in order to create such an opportunity. The best way for me is to keep on working. I believe in the necessity of such an institution, and I cannot wait any longer. I hope it will encourage other people to put in their own effort, to see the realisation of an art form that could in its beauty equal our people's incredible determination to survive.

Q: It is interesting that one of the scholarships is for the preservation and restoration of art. Is that specially important for Palestinians?

A: Yes, really I feel that there are many levels of national assertion. In my own capacity, within my own speciality, I would really like to emphasise the need for national preservation of the visual arts. I hope at one time this scholarship could expand to include things that are beyond the visual arts.

I feel that there has to be a very creative approach to the conservation and preservation of tradition. It is not simply a matter of conserving tradition, nor reviving tradition, but rather of interacting with a tradition that is there, that has been there for so many years, and that is now disintegrating because of pressures which are political, economic, social, cultural and historical. That's why the school fund is really made for two kinds of people — the person who is a totally creative man or woman, and the person interested in conserving or preserving tradition. I think the two complement each other. One cannot act independently of the other.

Modern Arab art is a very new phenomenon, less than 100 years old. I could say the same thing perhaps about modern American art, which is less than 30-40 years old. But the visual tradition in the West has always been art in the American tradition. With Arab art this interest in framed works of art, pictorial art, is very new.

Painting by Palestinian artists has been based on the 19th century aesthet-

ics of Europe, but in a very raw and unsophisticated manner. That's why I think it's extremely important for Palestinians to actually have the opportunity to go out and interact with the world of art, to make a new art possible that can meet the level of the determination of the people to live. I would like the level of art among Palestinians to reach the level of the people's struggle to go on and survive. Art in general among Palestinians has suffered greatly from a very egocentric or ethnocentric outlook on life. Palestinian artists feel obliged, for some obscure reason, to express the Palestinian tragedy in every one of their paintings. Some of these paintings are awful. They have nothing to do with the language of self-expression and the world of aesthetics.

It's very important to know that there are many ways to express one's love for one's people and one's love for the land. I hear so much bitterness, and the irony of it all is that many of these artists who express their love for the land of Palestine have not done so

through painting the landscapes of Palestine. They would pass by a tree in their own village and not paint it. Rather they paint a mental tree, a symbol of something else. Their experience of visual expression comes out of thought rather than from an immediate sense of sight, feeling, smells...

Q: Do you think that's because of the anger and frustration of the artists, for example, on the West Bank?

A: Yes, it is true, but art is not only therapy, to free oneself from one's pent-up feelings. It's a combination of what we imagine and what we actually see. So much of the art among Palestinians is rooted in the narrative rather than in the visual tradition. One cannot go very far when one is hooked with an untrained eye and poor technique.

Q: You are also a writer. Is this why your art is a visual interpretation of words?



Untitled pen and ink drawing by Kamal Boullata published in *Working Cultures*, Washington, DC, 1978.

A: Most of the art created by the Arab has been on the verbal level and the visual level has been a branch of the verbal art. Throughout Islamic art the greatest art has been that of calligraphy and of Arabesque. Both relate to the verbal arts, mainly poetry. Even in music, the most popular form is the ballad. This is part of our tradition. It was instinctive in me to respond to the poetic vein of verbal expression because I am an Arab.

Throughout my life I have been working with words creating, translating poetry, editing works of poetry, teaching Arab literature at Georgetown University and simply communicating. During the last eight years, perhaps, the realm of word and the realm of colour began to overlap and I began to create a new synthesis of art that meets both the instincts within my own work. How much I have succeeded only time will tell.

Q: What are your artistic origins?

A: I started like every child, liking to paint, and I started painting everything I saw in front of me. I started playing with any kind of coloured pigment I had. I guess I never grew up, I kept playing. I happened to be in literature so I carried on my interest in literature and in words, but I combined these things.

The art that I do is based on the Kufic script, the most angular, and the most ancient, which was dictated by the chisel on the stone. This particular script is drawn, it is not written. In that respect I find it more graphically expressive, more of a painterly form. The medium I use is serigraphy, or printing through silk.

I believe anybody can be an artist. I don't believe it is dedicated to the few. But I think that you have to be courageous to want to play all your life, because all the adults in the world tell you how to make money and how to be realistic, how to have a seat of power and how to have children and how to build this and build that. I just wanted to play.

Q: Does your art also relate to your religious feelings?

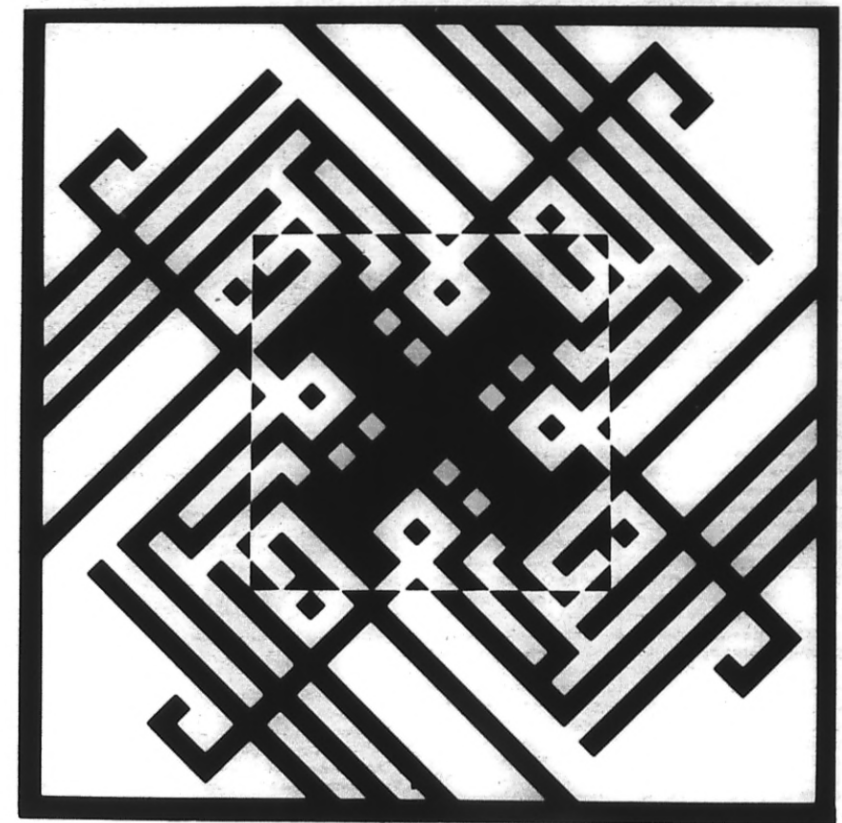
A: I would like each one of my works to be used as a focal point of contemplation within a private, modern space — what the Hindu call a 'mandala', which would invite further contemplation. I've used words that are very traditionally Islamic, however the words I've used are not confined to Islamic sources.

It belongs to a Jerusalem tradition. I pursue it as a part of my national culture, so it is a mixture of tradition, of memory, of everything. Being Palestinian to me means to be in total harmony with the Christian heritage of Palestine, equally with the Muslim heritage. I was born into a Christian family, I was brought up in an Islamic cult, and existentially I have been made a Jew, living away from my homeland.

Only others will be able to evaluate the political meaning of my art. But I wouldn't see it in political terms because I see that that actually labels and narrows what I'm trying to communicate.

Q: When you go back to Jerusalem with the exhibit, it will be the first time in a long while, won't it?

A: That's right. The last time I was there was November 16, 1968.



Ana-I-Haqq, 'I am the Creative Truth,' serigraph by Kamal Boullata.

Q: Are you looking forward to that?

A: I have very, very mixed feelings. I feel everything in my life has been stolen from me, and the only thing that is left are my memories of this place, namely Jerusalem. From what I hear, what has happened in Jerusalem in the 15 years of my absence has been tragic in many ways, and I have apprehensions about going there and having to live with a shattered dream of the place. I feel it's quite an effort on my part to do that. I don't know what will happen after that experience, and I'm getting all my strength to do it. It's a price I have to pay to live with the dream...

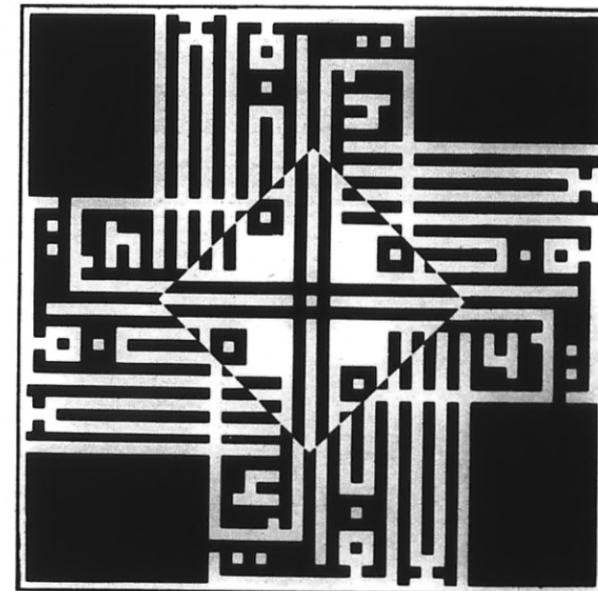
Q: Why do you live in Washington?

A: I think it has a lot to do with being a Palestinian. That is basically because Washington is an impersonal town. It's as if Washington were a boat — I'm in the sea but not of the sea. I deal more with my inner world.

I'm very close to the best galleries in the country, and I can always take the train and go to New York or Philadelphia or Boston. At the same time I'm close to the Library of Congress where I can read Arabic manuscripts from the fifth, sixth and seventh centuries, which I wouldn't even find in any other place. In that respect Washington becomes an ideal place for me. Only ideal because I happen to be Palestinian...

Q: Your real home is not in the US at all.

A: I have trained myself to be able to live at home almost anywhere where I am allowed to be myself.



Al-Alif Wa-I Ya, 'The Alpha and the Omega - Ibn Arabi', serigraph by Kamal Boullata. "Most of the art created by the Arab has been on the verbal level and the visual level has been a branch of the verbal art... During the last eight years, the realm of the word and the realm of colour began to overlap and I began to create a new synthesis of art that meets both the instincts within my own work."

Israel and its US supporters have a double standard towards the media. They tolerate, even celebrate the freedom of the Israeli press to be critical of Israeli policy in news coverage and editorial comment. On the other hand, they demand that the US media produce propaganda for Israel. Anything else is considered unfriendly, prejudiced, even anti-Semitic. This attitude is not easy for journalists, editors, or media proprietors to deal with. There are real pressures on the media not to offend influential minority groups. But in the case of Middle Eastern politics, these pressures exploit the special vulnerabilities of journalistic practice in this country.

These vulnerabilities are weaknesses in the way US newspapers, radio and television report foreign policy. They are not the product of the Arab-Israeli conflict by itself. They affect all foreign policy reporting — not just coverage of the Middle East. The first weakness is what I call the "Deep Throat" method of reporting; the second is the manipulation of the opinion columns, the so-called Op Ed pages, by hidden interests; the third is the absence of investigative journalism in diplomacy and foreign affairs; and the fourth is the hostility to foreign ideas in US publications — a kind of "domestic content" rule applied to imported journalism.

Editors, particularly of the largest and most powerful newspapers and television networks, think of themselves as producing journals of record. This consists of publishing or broadcasting whatever certain types of sources say, not because they are thought to be telling the truth, or even trying to tell the truth, but because of the official status of the sources. The theory of sources reporting goes like this. We record what our sources tell us, and the objectivity of the result is assured by the exactness of the transcription. A story with an official source is publishable because an official is doing the talking. A story with two official sources is twice as objective and truthful as a story with just one. A source can be a single official or a composite of several different officials saying slightly different things.

Of course, some official sources tell the truth; some do not. Some sources are authoritative, others are not. This creates an awkward problem in American journalism. There is plenty of room in the daily newspaper for a source telling a lie if the source is an official; there is much less room for the truth which doesn't have an official as a source for it. To tell the difference between the two, you need investigative journalism — and that is far less common in television than in newspapers, less common in newspapers than it used to be, and almost non-existent in foreign policy.

Many Arab officials, diplomats and lobbyists think that if only American journalists and editors knew the truth, they would print it. They think the key to changing US policy is getting the major newspapers to print the truth. What they fail to understand is that the reporting system here is dependent, not on access to the truth, but on access to official sources.

The power of the Israeli government and its supporters within the US administration and Congress is that they cater to journalists' needs for access to official sources. They provide information about US policymaking which is suitable for media consumption. Arab officials provide little access to US or even Arab journalists. They almost never reveal anything about US policymaking which makes a good lead-story in American terms. The Arab governments keep US secrets, to their disadvantage in media terms. The Israeli govern-

Why is the US press anti-Arab? The usual answer is political prejudice. In an article reprinted here from the London-based *Middle East International* Australian journalist Claudia Wright examines the problem against the background of the manner in which the American media handles foreign affairs issues generally.

The Pressures on the US Media



ment reveals US secrets for its own benefit in the US media. A good example is the recent coverage of the secret administration proposal to fund a Jordanian intervention force for the Gulf. Israel had a secret to offer that exposed a story of administration policymaking. Jordan tried to cover it up. In the Deep Throat system, the source with something to say will always get space; the source who covers up will get nothing.

The second weakness of the US media which distorts US coverage of the Middle East is the Op Ed page system. In theory, the Op Ed page was introduced as an extension of the editorial column and the letters page in order to provide more space for expressions of opinion, as distinct from regular "objective" reporting. However, since the same Deep Throats influence both the reporting and the opinion pieces, the effect of the Op Ed page system is to create the illusion of public support for the same

set of facts which the journalists are reporting elsewhere in the newspaper.

A recent US Court of Appeals judgement in a libel case offered a useful characterisation of what the Op Ed piece can be. The judgement came in a case involving the nationally syndicated columnists, Rowland Evans and Robert Novak — the duo well-known in Washington as "Errors and No Facts". Statements in a column of theirs were classified by the court as "hybrid statements". That is, they weren't pure opinion. Neither were they propositions that could be tested as true or false. "Hybrid statements," said the court, are expressions of an author's judgement that imply the existence of facts which the author's opinion relies on. The question the court had to face was whether these hidden, implicit facts were true or false. The judgement of libel depended on whether the author was responsible for publishing an opinion that implied facts that misled the reader and were false.

This is the problem with the Op Ed system, and with the work of syndicated columnists like Evans and Novak, George Will and William Safire. It is also steadily advancing into the remarks of television news anchors. These people do more than express personal opinions or report news. They provide intentionally selected — you might say slanted — presentations of facts. The facts are contrived by them in collaboration with their sources. The result is that the Op Ed system has become a watering hole for hidden interests, hybrid statements, and intelligence disinformation. One of the weekly news magazines has created a column where all the latest disinformation from the intelligence agencies can appear in one place. Perhaps this is what the Op Ed pages should do more explicitly. Reading them would be like smoking — you do it at the risk of misinforming or harming yourself.

It is difficult for US reporters to undertake investigative reporting in foreign affairs unless they have access to official leaks, or unless they have sources and information from foreign countries. Because US official sources usually provide the *antithesis* of what the investigative reporter is after, and because Washington-based journalists lack contacts abroad, the result is consistent and uneven investigative work. This wouldn't be so bad if the US media regularly supplemented its coverage of foreign affairs with the investigative reporting of foreign journalists. This is common practice among the media of the Western democracies, which regularly subscribe to US news services and syndicate US journalists. But apart from relatively minor use of Reuters, Agence France Presse, or the occasional Canadian or English reporter, US papers and television operate within strict protectionist guidelines. They don't allow foreign journalism to share US space. So far as I know, no one has ever complained about US "domestic content" rules for journalism as they do about foreign-produced steel or automobiles.

Coverage of the Grenada episode is interesting because it combines all the vulnerabilities of US journalism and yet illustrates what can be done to overcome them. When the Reagan administration decided to launch its invasion in total secrecy, there were no Deep Throats to provide newspaper reporters with front-page copy. The columnists were excluded, so there was nothing already prepared for the Op Ed page. The newspapers had done no investigative journalism on the Caribbean, and knew little about the Grenadian rulers — next to nothing about the rulers of Dominica, St. Lucia, Jamaica and the other states who participated in the invasion.

Under this blanket censorship, there was no alternative to investigating and printing the truth. It didn't take long for the White House to realise what a mistake it had made. The censorship was *exposing* the truth, not *concealing* it. It didn't take long for both the White House and the press corps to revert to form. The censorship was lifted, and the administration's claims began to appear more credible. The columnists defended the invasion.

Nothing like this has happened in recent Middle Eastern history. Israel and its supporters may complain about the uncensored coverage of the Lebanon invasion by the US media. But they should realize that if they had censored the news — and in many cases they tried — the coverage would have been far more truthful and far more damaging for them than it was.

PALESTINE AND LITERATURE



Hazar is an old child living on the old coast at Acre. Her house is very old. Hazar is a clever child. She always questions and tries to understand all the meanings of things.

Once Hazar asked her father, "Why don't we have a new house with a nice garden with swings, cradles, and toys, like other families who live in new Acre?"

From the Diary of Hazar of Acre

by Samia Faris

Her father answered, "We no longer own the land... This is your grandfather's house and it is left in our care."

"Why did he leave his house?"

"It is a long and bitter story, Hazar. Your grandfather went hunting 30 years ago and never returned," her father replied.

Hazar was astonished. "Why didn't he return?"

The father said, "The war prevented his return and then fences and borders were erected around his homeland. Your grandfather has been forced to live at Sabra camp in Lebanon."

This news saddened Hazar. She went to the seashore and built a small house of sand. Hazar also wrote a letter to her grandfather on the waves telling him she had built him a new house. A few moments passed and the waves stormed the little house. Hazar's words were totally wiped out by the foam. Hazar was deeply saddened and she walked home.

On a stormy moonless night, Hazar saw dazzling coloured lights moving rapidly across the heavens. She rushed to her father and said: "Father, look. What is in the sky?"

Her father, annoyed, looked up and said, "These are bombers coming from Lebanon. I am afraid for your grandfather."

Hazar was extremely worried about him. She went to bed and kept thinking about her grandfather all night.

The next day, Hazar walked very slowly to her school and dreamed in class and thought about her grandfather.

The teacher said, "Draw anything you like in your copybooks." Hazar drew her grandfather sitting outside his tent surrounded by enemy tanks and planes.

The teacher was astonished. "These are not drawings, Hazar. You

must draw something else or you will be punished." Hazar took her drawings and went home. She told her father what had happened.

"Don't worry, Hazar," her father said, "you expressed your feelings and because you are honest, you must continue drawing."

News agencies reported the Sabra and Shatila massacres. Hazar cried bitterly and strongly. Unable to let her frustrated emotions out, she went out to Acre's streets where she saw residents demonstrating and carrying flags. Hazar had never seen a demonstration. She quickly went home and drew a flag on her kerchief. She then went out and joined the demonstrators, raising her flag and shouting: "For your safety, grandfather. For your return. Come back, grandfather."

She was taken away. However, she walked firmly.



News from the Palestinian Literary World

Songs of Sad Nights and A Star Over Bethlehem.

Afnan al-Qassim: *Wolves and Olives*

Two Collections

Two new poetry collections were published recently by writers from Jerusalem and Nablus. *Come All*, published by al-Kateb, is Khalil Touma's third collection. It contains 16 poems previously published in local papers and magazines.

Days and Freedom's Spring is the first collection by poet Bassam Feidi of Nablus.

Khalil Touma's previous works are

figure in Jordan, the editor of the five volume folklore encyclopaedia and has published two collections of short stories. He is also the Secretary-General of the International Committee for Palestinian Folklore. A campaign is underway to press for his release.

Kamal Abd al-Fattah Honoured

Kamal Jaber Abd al-Fattah, head of the Bir Zeit University Research Centre, has been awarded the 1983 Shuman Institute prize for science for his research on agricultural geography. Sixty-one Arab scientists from various Arab countries competed for the five JD5000 prizes in the areas of medicine, humanities, agriculture, engineering and science.

The Shuman prize committee made up of 10 scientists, awarded Abd al-Fattah the prize for two studies of the area. The first dealt with the agriculture of Palestine, Jordan and Syria during the sixteenth century and the second dealt with the topography of the Asir region in southwest Saudi Arabia.

Abd al-Hamid Shuman, benefactor of the institute offering the prizes, was chairman of the Arab Bank in Jordan. He died in the 70s.

Right, illustrations from the latest edition of *Al Fajr al-Adabi*, an East Jerusalem literary magazine. Highlights of this month's edition include a study of Syrian poet Adonis by Shakr Farid Hassan and a theory of literary analysis by Fikri Khalifa emphasising the sources of literary creations and the importance of an author's audience.



Emil Touma

Palestine in the Ottoman Era

Palestine in the Ottoman Era, by Haifa writer Emil Touma, is the January *Al Fajr* Book of the Month publication. In it Touma describes cultural and social life in Palestine from the beginning of Ottoman rule in 1516 until the British conquered the country in 1917. He says he was stimulated to start the 10-chapter, 167 page project by "the Zionist claim that Palestine was an arid land and desert on which no grass grew."

Sarhan Held Without Charge

Nimr Sarhan, head of the PLO cultural affairs office in Amman, has now been held without charge at Zarqa prison since August 1983. He is not allowed visitors.

Sarhan is a prominent literary



WINDOW ON THE ARAB PRESS



Lead stories in *Al Fajr* and *Al Sha'ab* Palestinian dailies concentrated this week on meetings of the Fatah revolutionary council and PLO Chairman Arafat's two visits to the Algerian capital.

Al Quds daily's lead stories throughout the week concentrated on the restructuring of the Jordanian government and the reconvening of the suspended Jordanian parliament.

The discovery of more bombs in the West Bank and the uneasiness of Palestinian universities after a number of hoax calls also caught the attention of the local press.

The Right to Choose

Through our strong belief in the freedom of people and their right to choose the kind of life they want to live, we expressed hope that the recent Jordanian measures will be a step to return parliamentary life to Jordan, through the constitutional framework.

However, the Kuwaiti *Al-Rai al-Aam* reported that a Jordanian official was quoted as saying that "Jordan may negotiate with the West Bank representatives in the Jordanian parliament, rather than the PLO, in its attempt to resolve the Palestinian issue... and that if Yasir Arafat does not come to Amman soon to resume talks, Jordan will then negotiate with the West Bank representatives to find a solution to the problem."

We say that if this report is true, it undoubtedly reflects some serious implications the most important of which are:

- Such a step may have a negative impact on Palestinians in the occupied territories in particular, and those in the diaspora in general;

- This step will meet strong Arab and international opposition, particularly since the PLO has achieved worthwhile gains on both the Arab and international scenes.

In light of these facts, we hope that the mentioned report is baseless, particularly when we are at a time of dire need for a clear perspective and approach, and unity of line before anything else.

We say once again that any dialogue between the Palestinians and Jordanians has to be made on the following bases:

- The independence of the Palestinian decision;
- Holding strongly to the idea of an independent Palestinian state which itself will determine the kind of relationship it wants with Jordan and others among the Arab and friendly nations;

- Equality which is the basis of fraternal relations.

Our people will never accept to be followers in any form.

AL FAJR
January 10

Jordanian-Palestinian Relations

Maybe the most noticeable thing in the exchange of letters between King Hussein and his new prime minister is the insistence on the principle of cooperation between Jordan and the PLO in order for the Palestinian people to rid themselves from the nightmare of occupation.

This affirmation came as a decisive response to attempts to create trouble between brothers — Palestinian and Jordanian. The hidden goal behind these campaigns is to divide the ranks and weaken them so that they will not be able to face the next stage the Palestinian cause will go through.

On the other hand, it seems that Israel wants to get out of Lebanon as soon as possible with minimum losses while protecting what political and military gains it got during the invasion of Lebanon.

Israel wants to start its next political battle after it gets out of Lebanon. This battle, over the occupied Arab lands, Israel considers as important and the centre of its ideology, in spite of the disasters.

While there are Arab efforts to race with time in an attempt to encircle the Israeli plans and save the land, the Israeli counter-efforts are being intensified to maintain the *status quo* or change it in a way that would give it more control over the land.

From this point, consolidating the relations between the Jordanian and Palestinian people and resuming talks between them can create the atmosphere for better solutions that would put an end to the tragedy of the occupation and the suffering of the Palestinian people.

AL QUDS
January 11

Legitimate Demands

Once again we say that what unites us is much greater than what separates us.

We say that our people have reached an advanced stage of political maturity that shields it against any methods or ways

of argument that contradicts its democratic traditions and the rational approach our people established in the sea of Arab repression, executions and jails.

We say that the Palestinian legitimacy did not die by Syrian, Libyan and rebel guns. It did not fall because of a column by a vindictive editor in a Syrian newspaper. For this reason, there is no need to fight over the inheritance because the existence of the legitimacy is guaranteed by a basic thing and that is the existence of the Palestinian people itself. We say that the Palestinian democracy as we have known it in the national and central councils did not, and will not, die.

It is staying to express itself through the elected organs. For anyone to reject the judgement of these institutions is to declare that he does not abide by them anymore. This is because consenting to the judgement of the legitimate institutions is not a condition or a one-way road; it is a complete operation, which means accepting it is to accept the people's judgement and to bolster its unity.

Rejecting any part of it and refusing to deal with these institutions means rejecting the judgement of the people.

Denying a Palestinian party from its right to express its opinion is rejected and denounced. But it is our people's right to demand that its history and intelligence be respected. It is its right to demand that statements of intimidation, surrender and others which create desperation, be stopped. It is right to demand that the platform for the dialogue be the Executive Committee, the Central Council and the National Council, not the studios of the Syrian television and radio. It is our people's right to demand that everyone adhere to the judgement of the institutions, not to try to impose early judgement on them.

The unity of the PLO and our people is threatened. Many parties are working very hard these days to take advantage of the confusion among the Palestinians and the success of the Syrian and Libyan regimes in forcing the Palestinian forces out of Lebanon. The only way out of all this depends on abiding by the decisions of the nationalist

councils and the request of our history, struggle and symbols which we created through suffering and sacrifices.

Following any other approach will only serve splitting the unity of our people and the PLO.

AL SHA'AB
January 12

Amman Decides in Advance

(abridged)

Dealing with the current situation in the Palestinian home should not be left to circumstance or administrative decisions. All the signs of the past two years indicate that there are causes and factors behind what is surfacing from disputes and problems, much deeper than those which have been dealt with so far. These require diplomatic handling in a spirit of preserving the unity of the PLO and the decision of its National Council in its last session, so that we will be able to face conspiracies intended to end the role of the PLO.

We do not make assumptions but say what has been said at parliament meetings and at the new cabinet as well as the comments by the official Jordanian press. They indicate a new tune that has not been heard so clearly since the Rabat Summit in 1974.

Even the talk about "confederation" which existed a few months ago has been replaced by the talk that the Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan includes both banks and that this does not cancel the Palestinian identity since 1950. This means that they are preparing a fate for the PLO similar to that of the Arab Higher Committee, which still has offices in Amman.

This development in the official Jordanian position can lead to escalated conflict in the occupied land to pull the rug from under the PLO and to reactivate the merger, as was the case in 1950.

For this reason, no one should be fooled by the idea of "dialogue" which the Jordanian regime has already started implementing its intentions from. Everyone who considers the PLO

as their sole legitimate representative, and they are still the majority, should stand firm in front of all the official Jordanian steps and reject the Reagan initiative and Camp David and hold firm to the right to self-determination and an independent state.

AL TALIA
January 12

The Sad Affair

(abridged)

The worst thing, which a rational person cannot understand, is that Arab officials, in Jordan and elsewhere, keep fighting over occupied Palestinian land as if the Israeli occupation is not present and that the future of the West Bank would be determined by a decision they make — by agreement or disagreement.

The truth is that the Israeli leaders are very frank in this issue. When this foolish disagreement arises, they start saying again that they will not give up the West Bank or their settlement plans.

If there was any solution introduced by Israel or Washington that would return the occupied Palestinian and Syrian lands, then it is possible to have disagreements over the future of these lands.

We know very well that any solution to "save what can be saved" or "what is left" is not even present; not even the Reagan plan, which the Israeli rulers have rejected. With all its might, Washington was not able to extract any promise from Israel or even a promise to stop expanding settlements.

Why are the Arabs fighting then? Why are they anxious to blame the responsibility for the continuation of the occupation on a certain party? Why? Why are they not exposing the real convict who does not hide the crime but even talks proudly about it to the whole world — the Israeli occupation and its American aid?

This whole matter is very foolish and shows ignorance; or is it part of the treason which has been going on for 36 years? It is our right to ask and demand that an answer be given.

AL ITTIHAD
January 13



Entryway to Ain Karem Russian Orthodox convent flat, target of a grenade attack, January 15. The assault was attributed to the Israeli 'Terror Against Terror' (TNT) group. See story page 1.

Husan Land Grab Advances

The Israeli military objections committee visited, January 11, land in Husan which is subject to a grab order and declared it arid. Most of it has not been cultivated for many years the soldiers announced. Husan villagers are fighting to keep their farmland from being turned into a settlement as specified by a recent ministerial settlement committee decision.

The three-member committee, accompanied by three military advocates and settlers from the Gush Etzion settlement block, south of Bethlehem, told villagers and their lawyer after the visit that they would suggest the opening of a road to "raise the value of the land."

The military government State Land Department announced that 4000 dunums of land in Husan and nearby Wadi Foukin and Nahalin were confiscated on August 4, 1982. The military claimed it was not cultivated.

The land had been confiscated according to military order 59, 1967, article 2. Four local *mukhtars* had their seals of office withdrawn for refusing the confiscation orders. Palestinian residents were given 21 days to send ownership documents to the military objections committee.

Landowners in Husan formally complained and only after some months.

Their lawyer wrote to the Israeli authorities and was told that a decision would be made on whether the area was considered state land on May 13, 1983.

Later the Israeli officer said he remembered that Husan's land had been confiscated and wrote again. Advocate Ali Ghazian told *Al Fajr* he refused

to return the original letter as demanded by the Israeli and stressed that the landowners were never officially informed of the confiscation.

In his application to the military objections committee in the name of 58 landowners the lawyer said they had owned the land without objection for decades and that it was cultivated.

The 2571 confiscated dunums in Husan do not represent the real area involved, the lawyers said, since local farmers used to reduce the area of their land in order to avoid paying heavy taxes to the British occupation forces during the Mandate.

A Palestinian agricultural expert Nasser Qaimary reported to the military objections committee that the land is agricultural land.

Ghazian told *Al Fajr* that neither the Turks, nor British nor Jordanians claimed the land was theirs.

On June 6, 1983 the landowners got an order *nisi* from the military objections committee preventing the Israeli authorities from using the land.

On May 27, *Kol Ha'ir* published an article saying the Israeli authorities had plans for a settlement in Husan.

On August 8, 1982, four days after the confiscation, the ministerial committee on settlement issued a decision to build the settlement.

Despite the army committee's statement, the Husan case is not yet over. A session in February will hear the landowners.

Ghazian told *Al Fajr* that the state was not asked to prove its ownership of land.

Israel's Dheisheh Council Plan Fails

JERUSALEM — "In an attempt to create a Village League-style local council, 30 Dheisheh camp residents were summoned, January 12, to the military governor's office (in Bethlehem) and told to create a council of camp residents to coordinate projects between the Israeli 'civil administration' and the refugee camp."

"The refugees rejected the

proposal citing 'lack of faith' in the military government as one reason for not cooperating with it. They said they only coordinate development projects with UNRWA.

"Camp residents demanded, in the two-hour meeting, that the military reopen the camp roads and the youth centre and recognise refugees' civil rights

to work permits, building and driving licenses. The governor said he would only consider these demands if they were brought to him through his proposed council.

"The refugees also took this opportunity to express their opposition to the Israeli plan to resettle refugees." (Translation: *Al Itihad*, January 15, 1984).

Green Patrols Attack Naqab Beduin

BEER SHEBA — "The Green Patrols," the para-military wing of Israel's nature conservation association, brutally attacked the Salb clan at Wadi al-Sir, near the Dimona-Yeroham road in the Naqab, January 11.

"More than 70 Border Guards and members of the

'Green Patrol' riding in a convoy of 14 vehicles forced Beduin women shepherds taking sheep to the fields to return to their homes and herded their sheep into a military area about one kilometre away. When men from the tribe attempted to save the sheep, the Israeli guards arrested

three of them.

"The sheep were returned to their owners the next day, minus 25 head, and after they paid IS150,000 costs for transporting the sheep to Beer Sheba and an IS157,000 fine. (Translation: *Al Itihad*, January 13, 1984).

Big Fine for Demonstrator

The Ramallah military court fined Karam Saleh Karam, 21, of Bethlehem IS50,000 January 12 and sentenced him to three years suspended imprisonment

after convicting him of demonstrating and throwing stones at Israeli border guards last year. A second youth, Tawfiq Afaneh, was acquitted of the

same charges.

The court said Karam Karam participated in a demonstration along with 30 other youths at Nijmeh (Manger) Square in Bethlehem in March 1983. The charge sheet stated that Karam and four others attacked Israeli policemen and cars with stones. It also charges the youths with burning tyres in the streets and chanting slogans such as "Palestine is Arab."

One day after the demonstration, the five youths were arrested from their homes and detained in the Bethlehem police station for one week.

Three other youths from the group were tried and given varying sentences four months ago. Nimr Khadr Qanawati was fined IS10,000. Nidal Azzeh and Mohammed Zakari who were tried on the same day were fined IS15,000 each.

Jackson Gets Abu Ain Plea

The Nazareth-based Prisoners Friends Association (PFA) appealed, January 7, to US presidential hopeful Reverend Jesse Jackson to help secure the release of Ziad Abu Ain, a Palestinian prisoner who was supposed to be released in the PLO-Israeli prisoners of war exchange agreement of November 1983.

The appeal letter from the Palestinian-Israeli humanitarian group pointed out that Abu Ain had been taken from his prison to the airport in accordance with the exchange agreement reached through the auspices of the International Committee of the Red Cross. Abu Ain was returned to prison the same day.

The PFA's letter, signed by Nazareth lawyer Aziz

Shehadeh, chairman of its legal committee, told Jackson that in spite of subsequent protests the Israeli authorities refused to release Abu Ain.

In a political coup Jackson successfully negotiated with Syria early this month for the release of an American pilot shot down over Lebanon. "We find close similarity between (this) case and that of Ziad Abu Ain," the association stated.

The letter also asked Jackson, a civil rights activist in the US for more than 20 years who is running for the Democratic nomination for president, to call upon the Israeli authorities to improve prison conditions of Palestinian political prisoners and to assist prisoners' families.

NAAA MEETS REAGAN

Officials from the National Association of Arab Americans (NAAA) in Washington, DC were granted a meeting with US President Ronald Reagan, January 16.

The NAAA is an organisation of Arab Americans, established in 1972, with branches in many states in the US. Officials from the NAAA have met with

the last two US presidents, Carter and Ford. This will be the first meeting to take place between any Arab American organisation and Reagan. The NAAA, which calls itself "a conservative Arab American organisation," will meet Reagan at the White House along with other top American government officials. Bob Joseph, NAAA president, will lead the NAAA delegation.



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WEEKLY REVIEW

January 9, 1984

TULKARM DEMANDS HAMDALLAH RELEASE

TULKARM — Elected Tulkarm and Qalqiliya city councils and other local institutions issued a statement denouncing the arrest of Anabta Mayor Wahid Hamdallah and demanding his immediate release.

JORDAN RESTRICTS PALESTINIANS

WEST BANK — The Jordanian authorities ordered all West Bank residents born between 1958-63 and living in the East Bank to either sign up for the Jordanian draft or return to the West Bank by the end of this month.

SARTAWI ASSASSIN REVEALS IDENTITY

PORTUGAL — In a surprise move, the suspected assassin of PLO official Issam Sartawi said his name is Mohammed Hussein Rashid and that he was born in Jerusalem. He said he studied engineering and that he is 22 years old.



SETTLERS STONE CARS

TEL AVIV — Israel Radio said settlers and al-Bireh residents traded stones after an Israeli bus was stoned near a secondary school in al-Bireh. Residents complained to the police that settlers damaged 10 parked cars.

HADDAD HOPELESS

BEIRUT — Renegade Lebanese army commander Sa'ad Haddad was reported in a coma. Haddad is now at his home in Marjayoun, south Lebanon. He is believed to be suffering from cancer.

January 10, 1984

THREE BIDYA YOUTHS JAILED

RAMALLAH — Three youths from Bidya village were given jail

terms of between three and four years on charges of throwing firebombs at Israeli military vehicles.

JEWELRY STORES RAIDED

TULKARM — Israeli tax officials raided several jewelry stores here and imposed taxes on the owners ranging between IS200,000-330,000 each.

PHARMACIST HARRASSED

NABLUS — A Nablus pharmacist was arrested for refusing to pay value added tax. He was released five days later after he paid an IS250,000 bail.

TOWN ARREST RENEWED

NABLUS — The town arrest of lawyer Ghassan Shaka'a was extended six more months.

PRISONER HELD IN ISRAEL

JENIN — The prisoner, Othman Ra'afat, from Arrabeh village near Jenin, is being held in an Israeli jail, not at Ansar camp as was earlier believed. Ra'afat's family recently received a message from

tary training and stoning Israeli cars.

SARTAWI ASSASSIN SUSPECT ACQUITTED

PORTUGAL — The suspected

HABASH AND HAWATMEH IN ALGIERS

ALGIERS — Two Palestinian leaders, George Habash of the PFLP and Nayef Hawatme of the DFLP, arrived in Algiers

hills overlooking the 'civil administration' offices have been ordered by the Israeli archaeology department to vacate their homes within a few days. They said Israel is to look for archaeological sites.



The Arab Thought Forum Theatre Department honours graduating actors, January 4, in Jerusalem./AO photo

murderer of Issam Sartawi, Yasir Arafat's political advisor, was acquitted of assassination for lack of evidence. He was however given a three-year jail term on charges of carrying a fake passport.

yesterday at the invitation of Algerian President Chadli Ben Jedid.

January 11, 1984

HOUSE DEMOLISHED

HEBRON — A house owned by Najib Ja'abari in Hebron was demolished. Ja'abari has a building permit.

DAMIA BRIDGE CLOSED

AMMAN — Jordan's bridge authorities said Damia bridge linking the West Bank with Jordan will be closed for repairs until further notice.

STUDENTS DISMISSED

GAZA — The UNRWA director in Gaza dismissed seven students from one of the agency's technical institutes until they bring notes from their parents that they will not take part in any political activity in the school.

WARNING STRIKE IN NAJAH

NABLUS — Najah University students held a warning strike yesterday for four hours to protest the work permit and rehiring of foreign faculty who signed the permit. The students refuse to accept the work permit in any form.

STUDENT'S TRAVEL BARRED

JERUSALEM — A Tulkarm resident was arrested and forbidden to travel to Romania where he is pursuing higher education.

EVACUATION ORDERED

NABLUS — Ten residents of the southern mountain living on the

January 12, 1984

THREE HOUSES DEMOLISHED

HEBRON — Three houses in the villages of Samu'a and Tarqumiya, near Hebron, were demolished by the Israeli military under the pretext their owners did not possess a building license.

SETTLERS INVADE HOUSE

HEBRON — Several Kiryat Arba settlers invaded a house owned by Jibril Tawfiq Jwalhan, adjacent to the Ibrahim Mosque in Hebron, and vandalised it.

200 PHONES DISCONNECTED

TULKARM — Tulkarm residents complain that the Israeli military government disconnected 200 telephones in the city even though they have all paid their phone bills.

GAZANS MEET MAPAM PARTY

GAZA — Gaza's dismissed mayor, Rashad Shawwa, Dr Hatem Abu Ghazaleh and Issam Shawwa, visited the Israeli Mapam Party headquarters in Tel Aviv where they met party officials. Rashad Shawwa said the meeting came at the invitation of the Mapam officials and intended to discuss developments in the region.

C COLLEGE STUDENTS UNEMPLOYED

NABLUS — None of the students who finished a two-year programme at Najah Institute in Nablus has been able to get a job because they refused to take the comprehensive exams, students said. They said Jordan refuses to recognise their diplomas.



Voluntary work group builds bus stop on Hebron Road near Beit Ummar village, January 14/AO photo



Israeli soldiers place barbed wire around Arab houses in the Dahiet al-Barid area on the Jerusalem-Ramallah Road, January 13. The fence is to separate Arab homes from a nearby army camp./AO photo

ARAJ MEETS AUSTRALIAN DELEGATES

BEIT JALA — Farah Araj, mayor of Beit Jala, received an eight-member Australian delegation currently visiting the area. They discussed the Palestinian situation.

COURT UPHOLDS PRIEST'S SENTENCE

HAIFA — Haifa District Court upheld a lower court decision to withhold the passport of the Greek Orthodox priest, Father Fawzi Khoury, for five months and to release him on a \$100,000 bail. Khoury wanted to go to Paris where he is studying for a PhD.

January 13, 1984

WIRE ERECTED NEAR HOUSE

JERUSALEM — The Israeli army erected an eight-metre-wide barbed wire barrier on the street leading to the house of Omar Harroub in Dahiet al-Barid, a

Jerusalem neighbourhood. Harroub was told by his lawyer and other Israeli officials that the presence of the wire was illegal.

NEW SETTLEMENT IN WEST BANK

TEL AVIV — A semi-military base in the Jordan Valley will be converted into a civilian settlement next week. The site is located 20 kilometres north of Beisan. Settlers are expected to move in after two months when buildings are erected.

ARMY SEARCHES ARAB VILLAGES

TEL AVIV — The Israeli army and border guards searched several Arab villages in Wadi A'ara looking for weapons.

A machine gun and ammunition were found during the search. Several people were arrested.

ARMY DESTROYS FIELDS

SOUTH LEBANON — The Israeli army destroyed crops on more than four dunums of fields near

Sarafand village in south Lebanon. The area was the site of guerrilla attacks on Israeli soldiers last week.

MISSION OF TERROR

TEL AVIV — Extremist Jewish Rabbi Meir Kahane said he is willing to head an Israeli terror group to drive the Palestinians out of their land. He said this allows him to complete his 'mission' here.

DHEISHEH REFUSES COLLABORATION

BETHLEHEM — Residents of Dheishah camp, near Bethlehem, refused to accept orders from the district military governor to form a committee to cooperate with the Israeli 'civil administration'.

FINED FOR ATTACK

RAMALLAH — A Bethlehem youth was fined \$50,000 by the military government and given a three-year suspended sentence after he was convicted of attacking an Israeli soldier and the city's police station.

ISRAELIS PREFER ELSEWHERE

TEL AVIV — An Interior Ministry representative in the Knesset Finance Committee said 1200 Israelis expressed a desire to give up their citizenship during 1982. He said there was a noticeable increase in 1983.

CONDEMNED, THEN PROMOTED

TEL AVIV — The Israeli command promoted Amos Yaron to Brigadier General.

Yaron has been implicated by the Israeli Kahan report of not doing anything to stop the Sabra and Shatila massacres in 1982 and allowing Phalange terrorists through Israeli lines to enter the Palestinian camps.

January 14, 1984

JENIN COUNCIL MEMBER RESIGNS

JENIN — A member of the Israeli-appointed Jenin city council, Mustafa A'ashor, resigned. Only three members and the council head are left.

ISRAEL BARS PNC TRAVEL

CAIRO — Israel officially rejected an Egyptian request to allow West Bank and Gaza Strip members of the Palestine National Council to travel to Algiers to take a part in the forthcoming council meeting.

VIDEO RAIDS

GAZA — Israeli soldiers raided several video cassette shops in Gaza looking for political tapes. Several tapes were confiscated.

ACTORS COURSE

JERUSALEM — The theatre department of the Arab Thought Forum graduated 13 students from its 45-day theatre, acting and direction course.

STUDENT TOWN ARRESTED

NABLUS — Mu'in Hassan Jabr, a Bethlehem University student from Balata refugee camp, near Nablus, was placed under town arrest for six months.

January 15, 1984

STUDENTS REJECT EXAMS

RAMALLAH — Students of community colleges and higher institutes held a rally at the Teachers Institute in Ramallah to oppose the Jordanian comprehensive exam.

GREEN PATROL CLASH WITH BEDUIN

TEL AVIV — Israel Radio said two Israeli Green Patrols, members of the paramilitary wing of the nature conservation association, were wounded during a clash with two Beduin after they tried to grab their sheep. The two shepherds were arrested.

ISRAELI JUSTIFICATION

TEL AVIV — Israel refused to allow dismissed Gaza Mayor Rashad Shawwa to travel to Amman recently "out of concern for his safety and a precaution against attempts on his life," an Israeli official said.

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Aruri

divided, that the Fatah opposition to a PLO-Jordanian confederacy *a la* Reagan plan is no longer relevant and will not have a veto. Arafat has written them off and he will not try to mollify them. He will, however, feel compelled to assuage those elements within Fatah who sat on the fence and who were outraged by his trip to Cairo. His public denunciation of the Reagan plan upon arriving in Tunis was intended to serve that purpose.

The fact is, however, that the Reagan plan is the maximum that is offered the PLO. Its substance does not differ from Camp David and in some ways, it is regressive, even by those standards. For example, it explicitly

excludes a Palestinian state and recognizes the permanence of Jewish settlements.

The so-called peace process which Hussein and Arafat may join will probably constitute the revival of autonomy talks in an expanded form. No wonder there was jubilation in Cairo, blessing in Washington, rushing to restructure the government in Jordan and recent expression of optimism in Israel. At the same time, Egypt muted its criticism of the US-Israel strategic accord and dispatched the first high-ranking envoy to Israel since the recall of its ambassador during the Israeli invasion of Lebanon.

Should this diplomatic movement succeed, Egypt and the US will be vindicated and Camp David will go down in history as America's greatest Middle East diplomatic achievement.

The international consensus on Palestine will have been shattered, and the hard-won achievement under Arafat's own leadership (the right of the Palestinians to represent themselves) will have been sacrificed at the altar of the "peace process." The latter could prove to be the single most devastating consequence of what Arafat's visit to Cairo entails.

Q: Then you see it as a trend rather than a reaction to a temporary, immediate event?

A: That is how I read it. The results of these talks between Arafat and Mubarak will be seen as a vindication of the position which Egypt has taken since 1977. Those moderate Arabs who were opposed to Camp David since 1977 are now saying, 'Well, if Arafat isn't worried about Camp David anymore, why should

we be?'

Arafat's visit may make reconciliation with Syria, with whom the PLO shares strategic objectives, much harder. I think it was the hope of many people who did not necessarily take the position of the dissidents or the Syrians but who remained neutral that once Arafat had considered all the options and placed things in the broader context, he would consider reconciliation with Syria rather essential. The visit to Cairo, I am afraid, may have dealt that option a serious blow. It is an implicit fact that the Mubarak visit is a sign that Arafat wants to enter go-it-alone talks in defiance of those neutralists. After all Syria does hold important cards. Even Reagan has belatedly recognised that fact. Arafat may have been a brilliant tactician throughout, but I am not sure about how sound his strategy has been.

In the Holy Land, there are two major Christian denominations and a number of smaller ones. For centuries the Eastern Greek Orthodox Church and the Western Roman Catholic Church have competed for holy sites and for the honour of having the largest congregation and the most property in the country. The Greek Orthodox Church considers itself the oldest church here and all other denominations as deviating from the "mother church."

In the past two centuries, most of the Christians living in Palestine found the church their only protection in times of war. To enjoy this, many people turned over property to the church, for titular protection — this gave church leaders power and money. Nevertheless, gaps between the parishioners and the clergy were often extremely wide.

In contrast, the Catholic Church was successful in keeping its parishioners happy. This was due to the vast financial resources the church possessed and used to build schools and other charitable institutions and the reforms of the 'Vatican I, and II.' The latter, held in 1962, set policy for the modernisation of the church and more importantly called for using the local language instead of Latin in the church. Arab clergy were also given power.

Greek Orthodox Church

The Greek Orthodox Church, on the other hand, is often accused of remaining closed, restricted, unreformed and somewhat poor. Unlike the hierarchy of the Roman Catholic Church with the Pope as the head, the Greek Orthodox Church consists of eight separate patriarchates, each independent and autonomous of the others: Constantinople (Istanbul), Alexandria, Jerusalem, Italy, Russia, Rumania, Bulgaria and Serbia. The patriarch of Constantinople is considered the first among equals, but has no jurisdiction outside his district.

The Jerusalem patriarchate, which governs all Palestine and Jordan, has had protracted difficulties between the congregation, who are all Arab, and the clerical hierarchy, who are Greek from the level of Bishop and up.

Christian historians date the major changes in the running of the Jerusalem Orthodox patriarchate to 1542 when Greeks began running the spiritual and administrative affairs of the church, a situation which has continued to this day. Church historians say that until that time local Arab patriarchs ran the Orthodox Church. Church history books show that the last Arab patriarch to rule over the Jerusalem district, Patriarch Attallah when the latter became too sick to run the church," reads a rare church history book written in Arabic. The book, written by Khalil Ibrahim Qaraqia and published in 1942, details that after Jermanos took over he worked to "purge the top positions in the church of native Arabs." Jermanos moved quickly. He wrote to friends and relatives in Greece to send monks and at the same time banned Arabs from entering monasteries. According to local sources in the church no Arab could enter a Greek Orthodox monastery and all Arabs ordained have been married — according to Greek Orthodox doctrine priests are permitted to marry but senior officials must be celibate.

Dr. Peter Qamri, a Beit Jala physi-

All is not well in the Greek Orthodox Community, *Al Fajr's* Daoud Kuttub discovered when he reviewed current problems with Arab members of the church. As with other theological disputes here, interpretations of politics and history both play their part in the current crisis.

The Greek Orthodox Church: Gaps Between Clergy and Laity



Greek Orthodox clergy in Bethlehem on Christmas: "Hatred and enmity between the church's Greek clergy and Arab community continue to be the major source of strife."

cian, has carried out considerable research on the history of the Orthodox Church. His conclusions, which he has outlined in speeches given recently at local Orthodox clubs, are that the Orthodox Church has deteriorated considerably because of the gap between clergy and laity. When the Greeks took over the Orthodox Church here the working language for documents, dealings and official transcripts changed from Arabic to Greek. This placed every Greek at an advantage over Arab clergymen and placed the whole parish at the mercy of non-Arab speakers — a situation which repeats itself today in the Israeli use of Hebrew over Arabic in ruling Palestinians.

Many local Orthodox pointed out to *Al Fajr* the ties connecting the Greek Church hierarchy with the various governments that ruled the Holy Land. "The spiritual authority of the church was

successful in staying on the good side of the Turkish, British, Jordanian and Israeli governments," said Albert Noursi, a Jerusalem accountant and a long time activist to improve the situation in the Arab Orthodox community.

Of the various governments that ruled Palestine it was only during the British Mandate that the Arab community was able to unify themselves and seek to change their lot. A book published by Nicola and Shehadeh Khoury in 1925 describes the efforts of the Arabs parish:

On July 15, 1923 the Orthodox community in Palestine succeeded in holding the first annual Arab Orthodox conference in Haifa. At this conference, which was attended by representatives of the Orthodox communities in Palestine and Transjordan, they demanded the British government interfere on

their behalf with the church. They also presented a 30-point proposal demanding reform. They demanded elementary and secondary schooling, that records and reference files be kept, pointed out that church property was in a shambles, asked for better salaries for Arab clergy and complained that the language of the ecclesiastical courts was Greek.

The last point was important because of the helplessness of the parish before court clerks who acted as translators. There are no civil marriages here and personal status changes are made in church courts. The conference delegates complained that while translating intimate family secrets, the clerks became aware of damning information which was sometimes used to blackmail people.

The Arab conference was repeated a number of times but without much success since the Mandate authorities sided with the church. A local council formed then continued to operate until 1967 however. With the Israeli occupation the church said it considered the council invalid and has refused to deal with it.

Continued Complaints

In many ways complaints of the members of the Orthodox Church have not changed since the Haifa conference of 1923. If anything the situation has deteriorated. Mitri Issa Tobeh, a *mukhtar* of the Orthodox community in Jerusalem's Old City, says the carelessness of the church leaders has caused massive emigration of Christian Palestinians since the occupation. Tobeh told *Al Fajr* that according to a census he had just completed there are only 3500 Orthodox individuals in Jerusalem today, a drop of 500 from last year alone. Tobeh complains that unless concrete steps are taken, "We will wake up one day and find that our community has been eradicated."

Albert Noursi echoed similar sentiments. "We used to be the largest community in the Holy Land and now the Catholics outnumber us." Noursi says that the spiritual leaders have failed in attracting anyone to church or church-related activities. "Members of the community are forced to go to church for weddings and funerals, and no more," said Noursi.

Community members also complain about the church's ineffectiveness in responding to requests for unified holidays. Christians throughout the world, including Jordan which lies within the scope of the Jerusalem patriarchate, have agreed that Christmas be celebrated according to the Western calendar and Easter according to the Eastern one.

Greek church leaders say it would be difficult to apply the changes in the Holy Land. They say there would be complex problems in holy places if church services were carried out at the same time. Orthodox clergymen also point out that such changes in the calendar can only take place after a meeting of the Ecumenical Church Council. The last such council recognised by the Orthodox Church was held in AD 787.

The situation of the Greek Orthodox Church today is that of dissension and division. Although financially the church possesses a lot of assets in the Old City of Jerusalem and throughout the country, its liquid assets are few — probably because of mismanagement, parishioners complain. The situation is so bad that clergymen are paid by the Greek government. The hatred and enmity between the church's Greek clergy and Arab community continue to be the major source of strife. Until this problem finds an acceptable solution no one can expect any real improvements in the status and standing of the church as a whole.